

TOP GUN

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CAN

TURNER
O'NEIL
WEEMS
SMITH

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



MICHAEL
TURNER
JOE
WEEMS
JD SMITH
1998

FATHOM created by Michael Turner



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS. There are two worlds,

the one we know,

and the one below.

For
Grace

Your many creative contributions to Fathom in both characters and concepts have been invaluable. Our long conversations over cheap wine and Cheetos™ were when this story began to take shape. It was the brainstorming sessions with me sketching and you sculpting and me pacing and you typing and both of us in fits of laughter that made the genesis of this book one of the great experiences in my life.

Genetics made you my mother, but who you are has made you my best friend.

With love,
Michael

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story BILL O'NEIL

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We owe you beers.

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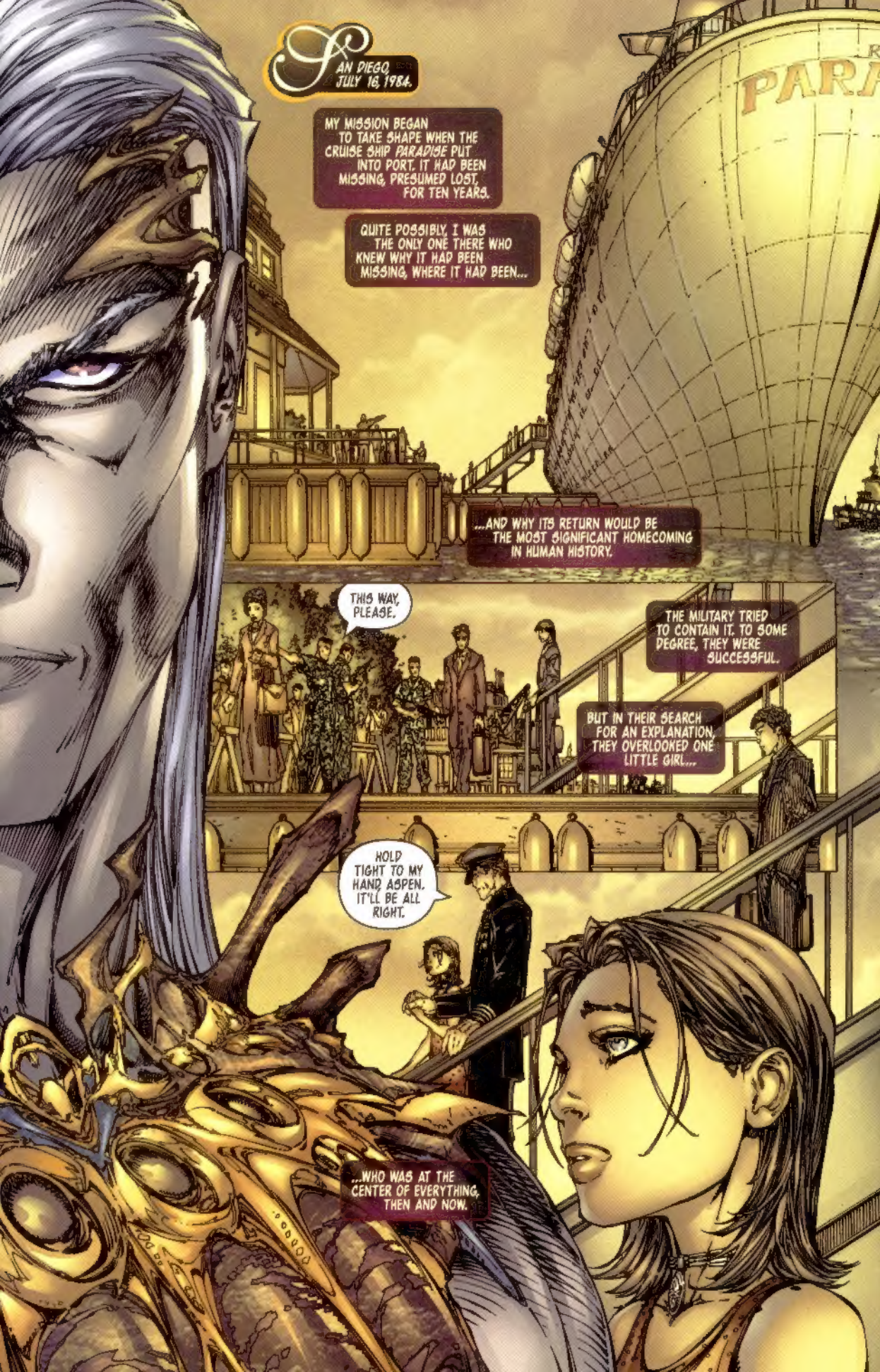
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FOR
image
COMICS
LARRY MARDER
executive director



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PRINTED IN CANADA



S
SAN DIEGO
JULY 16, 1984.

MY MISSION BEGAN
TO TAKE SHAPE WHEN THE
CRUISE SHIP PARADISE PUT
INTO PORT. IT HAD BEEN
MISSING, PRESUMED LOST,
FOR TEN YEARS.

QUITE POSSIBLY, I WAS
THE ONLY ONE THERE WHO
KNEW WHY IT HAD BEEN
MISSING, WHERE IT HAD BEEN...

...AND WHY ITS RETURN WOULD BE
THE MOST SIGNIFICANT HOMECOMING
IN HUMAN HISTORY.

THIS WAY,
PLEASE.

THE MILITARY TRIED
TO CONTAIN IT. TO SOME
DEGREE, THEY WERE
SUCCESSFUL.

BUT IN THEIR SEARCH
FOR AN EXPLANATION,
THEY OVERLOOKED ONE
LITTLE GIRL...

HOLD
TIGHT TO MY
HAND ASPEN.
IT'LL BE ALL
RIGHT.

...WHO WAS AT THE
CENTER OF EVERYTHING,
THEN AND NOW.

YES, IT'S THE SAME
BOAT, MR. SECRETARY...I HAVE NO
IDEA WHERE IT CAME FROM...YES, SIR,
WE'RE LOOKING INTO IT.

NO,
SIR, ONE
MOMENT.

LIEUTENANT, I WANT
EVERY CAMERA ON THIS DOCK
RENDERED INOPERATIONAL. AND
GET THESE CIVILIANS OUT
OF HERE. NOW.

NO ONE IS QUITE
SURE WHAT TO MAKE OF THE
RETURN OF THE CRUISE SHIP
PARADISE, REPORTED LOST
MORE THAN TEN YEARS
AGO...

...BUT AS YOU CAN
SEE FROM THE HEAVY
MILITARY PRESENCE
BEHIND ME--

HEY!
WHAT THE
HELL...

THE
AREA HAS
BEEN
CONTAINED
SIR.

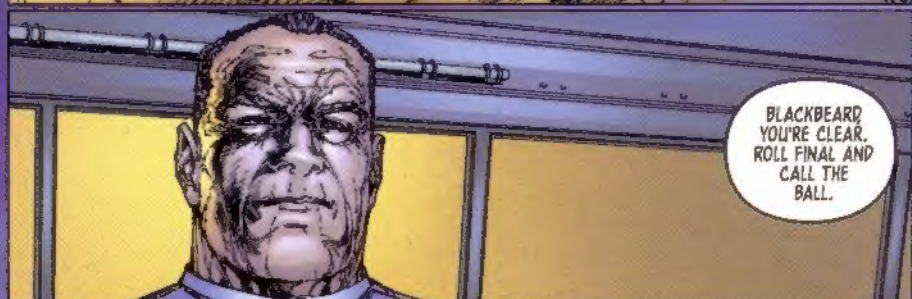
MR. SECRETARY,
WE HAVE SECURED THE PARADISE.
THE PASSENGERS HAVE BEEN DETAINED
PENDING DEBRIEFING.

YES, SIR.
THE CAMERAS HAVE
BEEN DESTROYED AND
THE REPORTERS WARNED
THE SITUATION IS
BLACKED OUT.

INFORMALLY SPEAKING,
SIR, WE'VE SLAUGHTERED THE FIRST
AMENDMENT. I'D SUGGEST YOU ALERT
THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

NO,
SIR.

FACILITY
OPERATIONS
HAVE NOT BEEN
COMPROMISED



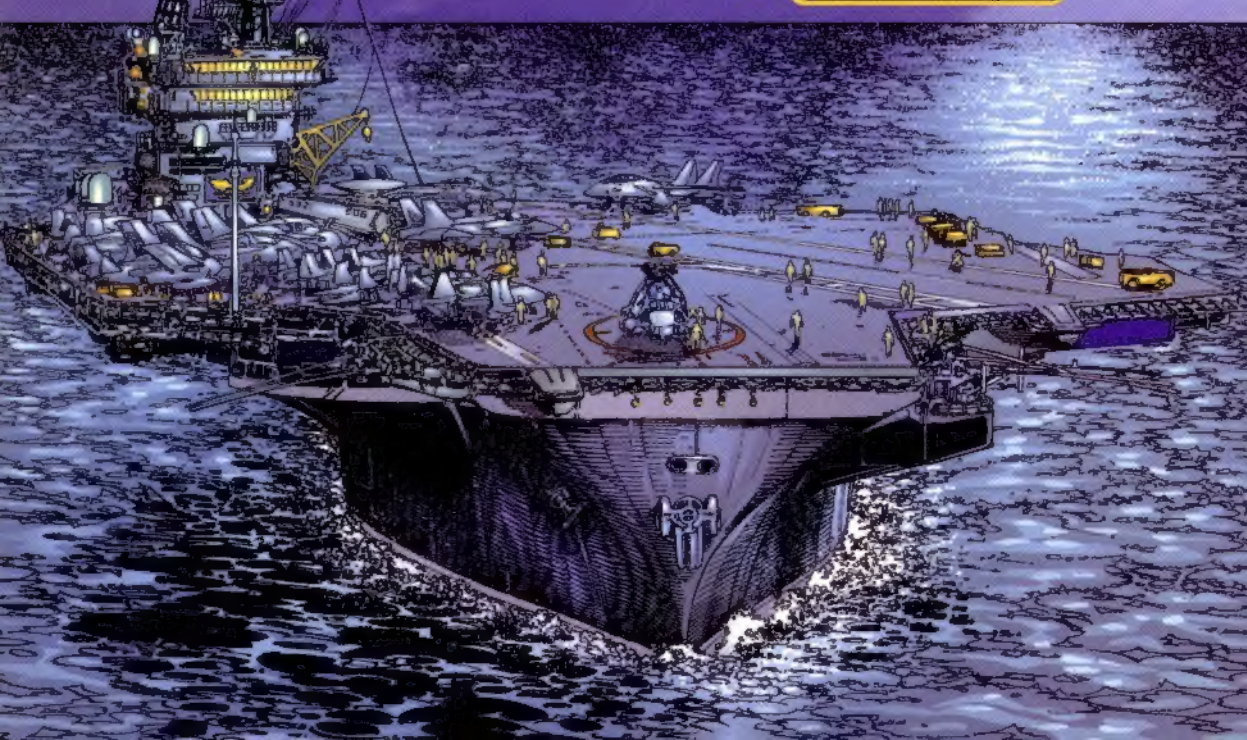
BLACKBEARD,
YOU'RE CLEAR.
ROLL FINAL AND
CALL THE
BALL.



ROGER, LSO.
TWO-ZERO-NINE,
TOMCAT BALL.
FIELD STATE SIX-
POINT-FIVE.

ROGER,
BALL.

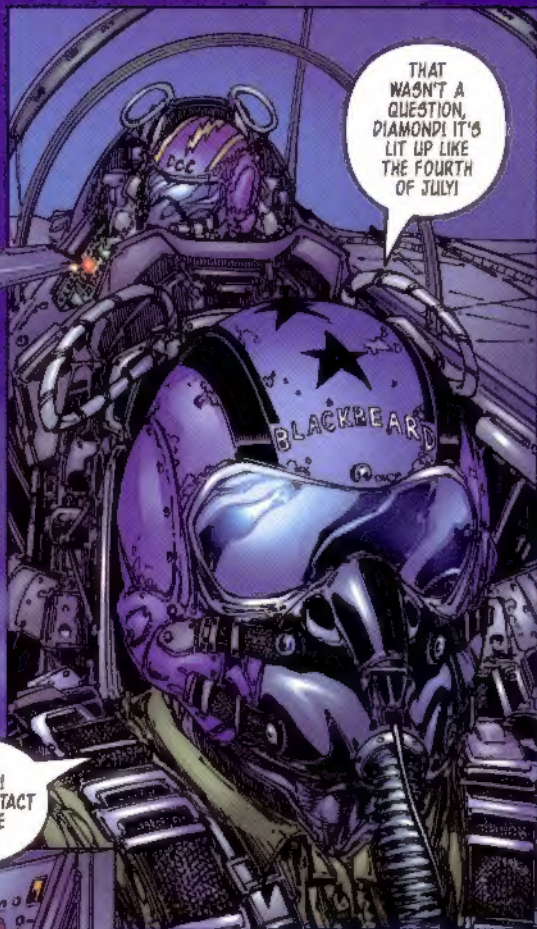
THREE MONTHS AGO,
THE USS GEORGE WASHINGTON
IS NINETY-FIVE MILES NORTH
OF HONOLULU, HAWAII.





LSQ, CANCEL
APPROACH! DIAMOND,
I HAVE A CONTACT
BEARING 10
DEGREES!

NEGATIVE.
RADAR IS
BLANK.



THAT
WASN'T A
QUESTION,
DIAMOND! IT'S
LIT UP LIKE
THE FOURTH
OF JULY!



STILL
NOTHING ON
RADAR

IT'S
UNDERWATER!
REPEAT, THE CONTACT
IS UNDER
THE SURFACE!

NO,
SIR.

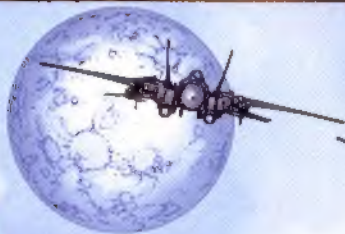


HE MUST BE
HALLUCINATING.

SEND
HIM IN FOR
A CLOSER
LOOK.

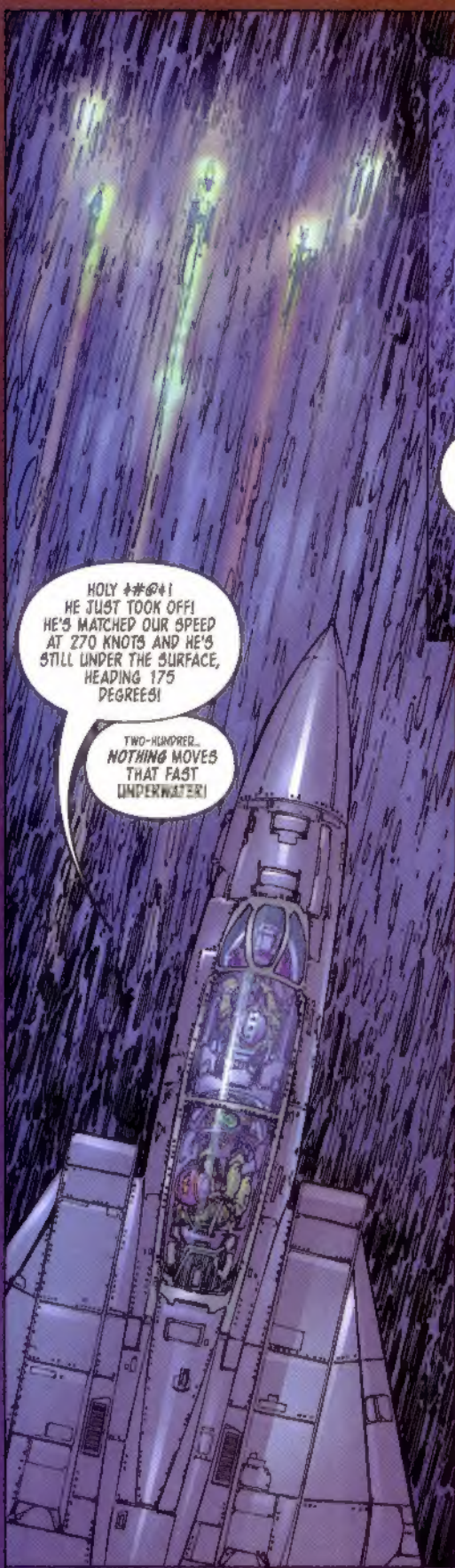
ADMIRAL!

I WANT
TO KNOW WHO
IT BELONGS TO,
DAMMIT! SEND
HIM IN!



BLACKBEARD
GO LOW FOR A
VISUAL IDENT.

ROGER,
DIAMOND!
WE'RE COMING
UP ON
HIM!



HOLY ****!
HE JUST TOOK OFF!
HE'S MATCHED OUR SPEED
AT 270 KNOTS AND HE'S
STILL UNDER THE SURFACE,
HEADING 175
DEGREES!

TWO-HUNDRED...
NOTHING MOVES
THAT FAST
UNDERWATER!

THAT'S
NOT POSSIBLE!
IT PULLED A 180
WITHOUT SLOWING
DOWN!

JOHN,
TELL ME I'M
NOT SEEING
THINGS.

I AM
IF YOUR ARE,
JIMBO.

HAVE YOU
IDENTIFIED THE
NATION OF
ORIGIN,
LIEUTENANT?

IT'S COMING TO
THE SURFACE AND SLOWING.
WE'RE CLOSING ON A
THOUSAND YARDS. THE
LIGHT'S FORMED INTO SOME
KIND OF PIER--

JESUS
CHRISTI

GET
THE HELL
OUT--

MOTHER--

TURN TURN
TUR--

...

SIR...?

GET ME
THE SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE.



PRESENT DAY,
SAN DIEGO,
CALIFORNIA.

WATER
IS MY LIFE.

I GREW UP WITH MY ADOPTED
FATHER, CAPTAIN MATTHEWS, FIVE
MINUTES FROM THE BEACH. I'VE
BEEN LIKE A FISH EVER SINCE.

I STUDIED THE WATER AT
U.C. SAN DIEGO. FINALLY, ONE
DAY AT THE END OF FOREVER,
THEY PUT SOME ALPHABET
SOUP AFTER MY NAME AND
CALLED ME A MARINE BIOLOGIST.

MY FRIENDS TELL ME I'M
OBSESSED WITH THE STUFF.
WELL, OKAY, I AM.

BASICALLY, IF I'M NOT IN IT,
ON IT, OR UNDER IT, I'M LOOKING
AT IT THROUGH A MICROSCOPE.

I GUESS I'VE JUST GOT
WATER ON THE BRAIN.

ASPEN...

...WE'VE GOTTA
GET YOU TO THE
AIRPORT.

TODAY'S
THE DAY,
HUH?

YEAH, RIGHT,
LOOK AT LITTLE MISS
"I'M COOL." LIKE YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN LOOKING
FORWARD TO THIS FOR,
LIKE, THREE
MONTHS.

YEAH, YEAH.
YOU'RE SURE IT'S NO
TROUBLE DRIVING
ME?

NOPE. I'VE
GOT TO GET TO THE
STATION, ANYWAY. I'M
SLATED TO DO A FEATURE
ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT
IN SAN DIEGO'S ECONOMY
FOR THE ELEVEN
O'CLOCK NEWS.

WHO'S
IN THE HOT
SEAT
TONIGHT?

THE COMMISSIONER
OF PORTS. I PLAN TO MAKE
HIM...AH...REALLY
UNCOMFORTABLE.

GIVE
THE VIEWERS
WHAT THEY
WANT.

YOU KNOW
IT, KIR CAN YOU
BE READY IN
TEN?

YEAH.
I'LL MEET
YOU
OUTSIDE.

TODAY'S THE DAY,
ALL RIGHT.



INTERLUDE.

MY FIRST REAL CHANCE TO WIN HER OVER CAME FIVE YEARS AFTER THE PARADISE.

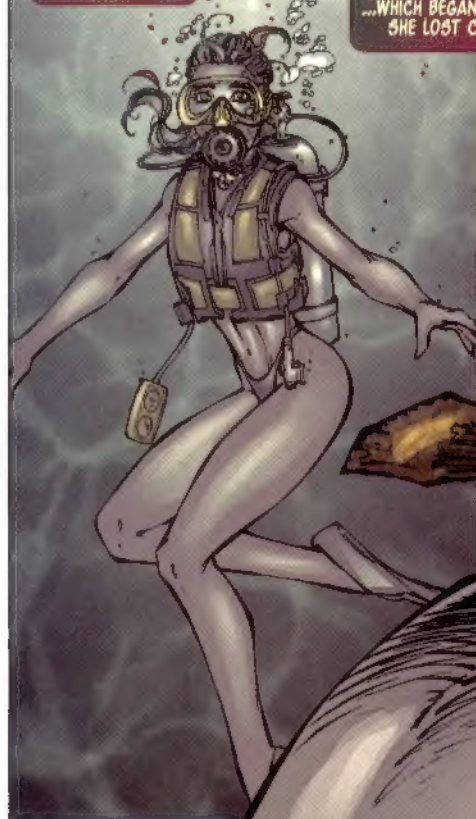


SHE WAS LEARNING TO USE THE VULGAR BREATHING APPARATUS AND WAS THE FIRST ONE OFF THE BOAT, WHICH MADE MY APPROACH SIMPLE.



HER EMOTIONS WERE POWERFUL, EASY TO REAR, FEAR RAPIDLY TURNED TO WONDER...

...WHICH BEGAN TO FADE AS SHE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS.



IN THAT STATE SHE WAS QUITE VULNERABLE TO SUGGESTION, SHE WAS PRACTICALLY MINE...

...WHEN HER INSTRUCTOR'S ARRIVAL FORCED US TO RETREAT. THE TIME WASN'T YET RIGHT FOR A CONFRONTATION.

THEN, I WAS FRUSTRATED TO HAVE BEEN SO CLOSE TO HER AND ACHIEVED NOTHING.

HOWEVER, HAD I WON HER OVER THAT DAY, MY CURRENT MISSION WOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN SHAPE.

AND ULTIMATELY, IT'S THIS MISSION THAT WILL ACHIEVE EVERYTHING.



PRESENT DAY. THE EXPLORATION VESSEL
VIKING II IS FIFTY MILES NORTH OF
HONOLULU, HAWAII.



MS. MATTHEWS?
ASPEN MATTHEWS? I'M
AKIKO NIGATA. DIVE MASTER
LAWLER ASKED ME TO KEEP
AN EYE ON YOU UNTIL
WE'RE READY TO
DIVE.

ARE YOU
PART OF THE
PMD
STAFF?

IN A SENSE.
I'M UNRAVELING
THE PHYSICS OF
THE...UH...WELL,
YOU'LL SEE.

SEE
WHAT?

HMMM...I'M
NOT GOING TO SPOIL THE
SURPRISE. JUST DON'T EXPECT
MUCH IN THE WAY OF
NIGHTLIFE.

OH, GREAT. HERE
COMES EVERYBODY'S
FAVORITE
PMD KAMMER.

WHAT?
OH GOD.

ASPEN
MATTHEWS!
LONG-TIME-
NO-SEE!

LONG TIME
NO WANT TO
SEE, JACK.

FOLKS...

COME ON, ASPEN. ADMIT IT.
YOU'VE MISSED
ME.

WE GOT A TIGHT
SCHEDULE TO KEEP YOU'LL HAVE
OVER AN HOUR TO GET TOLCHY-FEELY
IN THE SUB, SO STOW THE GAD
AND LISTEN UP!



I'M LAWLER, THE
DIVE MASTER. WE'LL BE GOING
1200 FEET INTO THE DEEPS, WHICH
IS TOTALLY UNLIKE ANYTHING
YOU'VE DONE BEFORE.

AS SOON AS
THEY LOWER US INTO THE
WATER WE'LL BEGIN THE
DESCENT...

...WHICH IS A BIT
OF A NERVE TEST. IT'S DARK
MOST OF THE WAY DOWN, AND
THE SUB CLANKS AND POPS
AS THE PRESSURE WORKS
ON IT.



THIS AIN'T
SEA WORLD
FOLKS. THIS IS
THE REAL
THING.

DO WE
GET AN
IN-FLOAT
MOVIE?

NO, YOU GET
A LECTURE ABOUT
THE DANGERS OF HIGH
PRESSURE ON THE
HUMAN BODY. AT TWELVE
HUNDRED FEET, WE'RE
TALKING CLOSE TO 40
ATMOSPHERES. THAT KIND
OF PRESSURE CAN BE
LETHAL, WITHOUT A
WHOLE HELL OF A LOT
OF WARNING.

SO IF ANY OF
YOU START FEELING LIKE
YOUR INNARDS ARE GRINDING
AGAINST EACH OTHER, TELL
ME IMMEDIATELY. THAT'S
USUALLY THE FIRST SIGN
OF PRESSURE
SICKNESS.

AND IF YOU'RE DOWN
THERE AND YOU DON'T FEEL GOOD
DON'T ASSUME YOU'VE CAUGHT A
COLD. GET YOUR ASS TO THE
INFIRMARY RIGHT AWAY.

YOU MAKE IT
ALL SOUND LIKE
SO MUCH FUN,
LAWLER.

FOR ONCE IN YOUR
LIFE, JACK, TAKE SOMETHING
SERIOUSLY, WILL YOU?

WHEN I WAS INVITED
HERE, I EXPECTED TO
MAKE SOME DIFFICULT
ADJUSTMENTS.

TAKING A TRIP WITH JACK,
MY NIGHTMARE EX-BOYFRIEND FROM
MY FIRST RESEARCH JOB WASN'T
ONE OF THEM.

LATER...

SO,
ASPEN,
NOW THAT
WE'VE BEEN
REUNITED...

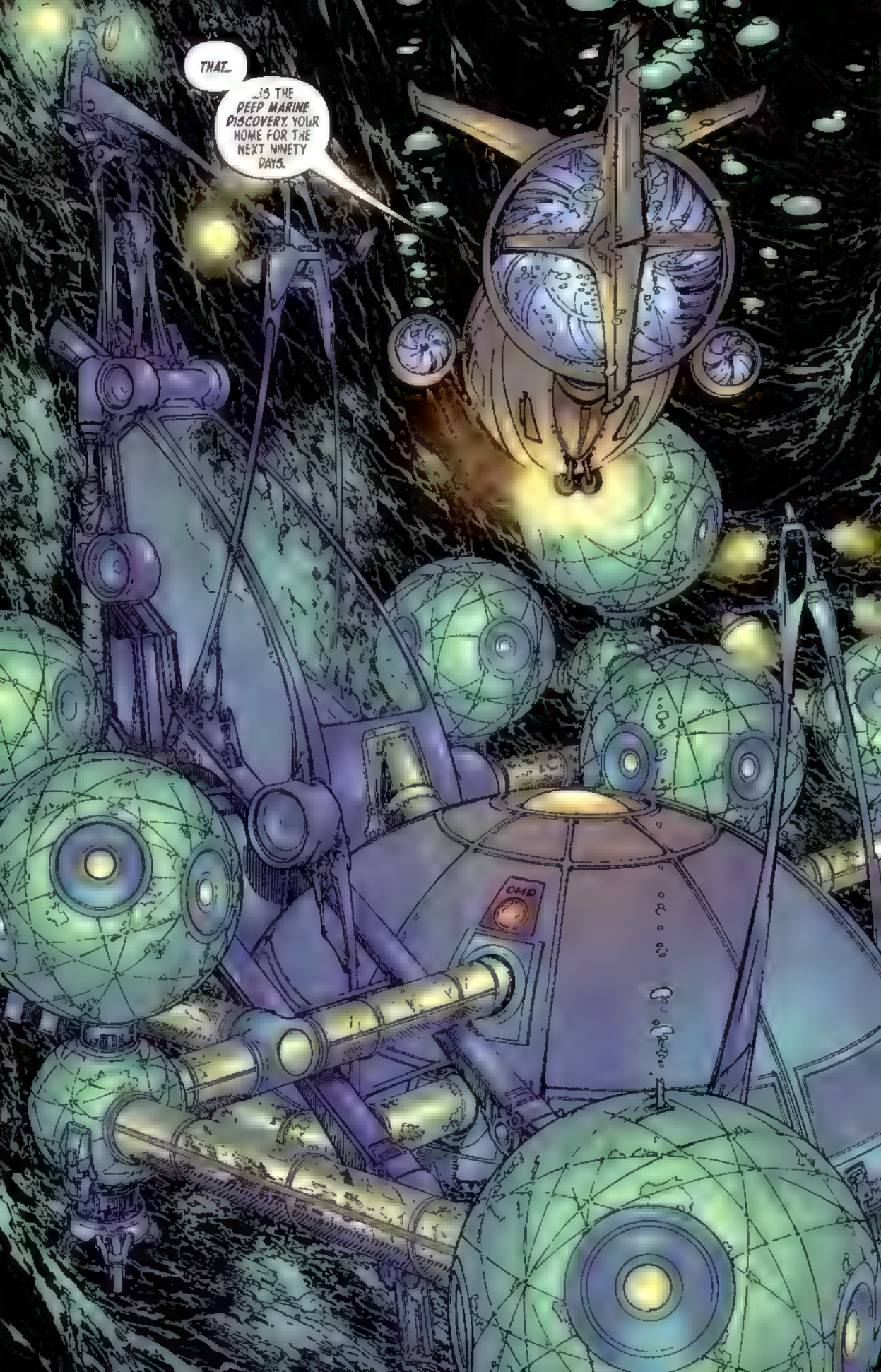
...I THINK
WE SHOULD
TRY DATING
AGAIN.

HOLD
YOUR BREATH
ON THAT ONE,
BUDDY.

WHAT IS
THAT?

THAT.

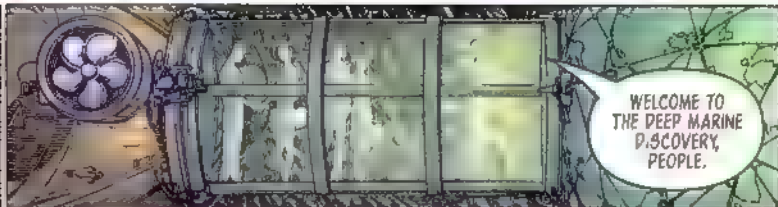
...IS THE
DEEP MARINE
DISCOVERY. YOUR
HOME FOR THE
NEXT NINETY
DAYS.



HELP! I'M
TRAPPED IN A
GIANT BASKETBALL
FACTORY!

WORD TO THE
WISE, CRACKERJACK
DIRECTOR JARVIS IS A
PLEASANT ENOUGH GUY,
BUT WISEASS REMARKS
ARE A PASSPORT TO HIS
POGHOUSE. AND BELIEVE
ME--THAT'S A PLACE
YOU DON'T WANNA
BE.

END OF
THE LINE, FOLKS.
THANKS FOR FLOATING
THE FRIENDLY WATERS.
SEE YOU ON THE
WAY LB.



WELCOME TO
THE DEEP MARINE
DISCOVERY
PEOPLE.

I'M ALEXANDER
JARVIS, DIRECTOR OF
THE DMR

MS. MATTHEWS,
MR. GREGORY, YOU PICKED
A BUSY DAY FOR YOUR FIRST
TIME DOWN. SO I'M GOING
TO HAVE TO RUSH YOU
THROUGH A QUICK
TOUR.

LIEUTENANT
FRANKLIN HERE WILL TAKE
YOUR BAGS AND SEE TO YOUR
I.D CARDS. AKIMO, THEY'RE
WAITING FOR YOU IN
LAB ELEVEN.

SO IF I'VE GOT THIS
STRAIGHT, THE DMR IS LIKE THE
LOVE BOAT, AND YOU'RE CAPTAIN
STEBLING, RIGHT?

NOT QUITE,
THERE, JACK. THIS IS
FANTASY ISLAND AND
I'M MR. ROULKE. SEE
THE DIFFERENCE?

MANSTER TWO
TO HARBOR COMMAND!
WE HAVE INTRUDERS
IN THE FEED
HATCH!

THAT WAS YOUR
FREEBIE, MR. GREGORY. ANY MORE
OF THAT AND YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF
WRITING CODE FOR THE SANITATION
COMPUTERS.

WHAT
DOES ASPEN 3
SAY? "DANGER!
FROZEN SOLAR
DO NOT
TOUCH."

NOW, PLEASE
FOLLOW ME. I'VE A
LOT TO SHOW YOU IN
A VERY SHORT
TIME.

RIGHT NOW,
YOU'RE WITH ME. BUT ONCE
YOU RECEIVE YOUR I.D. CARDS,
YOU MUST DISPLAY THEM AT
ALL TIMES AS THEY
INDICATE YOUR SECURITY
CLEARANCE, AND MEDICAL
INFORMATION.

PISS OFF,
JACK.

THAT'S
ENOUGH,
MR. GREGORY.
THIS RIGHT
HERE...

...IS THE
HEART OF THE
DMR

WHAT...?
WHAT, LH...

WELCOME
TO FANTASY
ISLAND

...WHAT IS IT? WHERE'D IT COME FROM?

IT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE. A TRANSPORT... FOR USE UNDERWATER. AND IT CAME FROM RIGHT HERE. WE COULDN'T MOVE IT, SO WE BUILT THE DMD AROUND IT.

ASPEN, AS A SPECIALIST IN MARINE PROPULSION, YOU WERE BROUGHT HERE TO GIVE US SOME FRESH IDEAS. ANY QUESTIONS SO FAR?

QUESTIONS...? WHERE DO I START? WHO BUILT IT? AND WHAT'S IT MADE OUT OF? WHAT DOES IT USE FOR FUEL? DOES IT HAVE A CONTROL STICK OR SOME OTHER--?

WHOA, WHOA. WE DON'T HAVE ANSWERS TO MOST OF THOSE, BECAUSE WE'VE...UH...ACTUALLY, WE'VE BEEN TOTALLY UNABLE TO GET INSIDE OF IT.

I GOT ONE. WHAT'S WITH THE HEAVY MILITARY VIBE AROUND HERE?

WELL JACK, YOU PROBABLY KNOW THAT THE DMD WAS ORIGINALLY A JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND JAPAN.

A FEW YEARS AGO, THE JAPANESE ACCUSED US OF TRADING FALSE INFORMATION. THE ACCUSATIONS WERE COMPLETELY UNFOUNDED BUT REGARDLESS, THE INCIDENT BROUGHT EVERYONE'S GUARD UP.

SHORTLY AFTER THAT, WE CAUGHT THEM DEALING US FALSEHOODS. SUDDENLY, IT WAS LIKE BERLIN IN 1962. THE WALL WENT UP. THE GUARDS WERE POSITIONED AND...

...WELL, YOU CAN IMAGINE THE REST.

AND THAT MAN COMING FROM THE JAPANESE SIDE? WHO'S HE?

HIS NAME IS CANNON HAWKE. AT PRESENT, HE'S THE ONLY PERSON BOTH SIDES TRUST, SO HE ACTS AS OUR EMBASSY.

YOU SHOULD GROOM ME FOR THAT JOB, JARVIS. I CAN SEE IT NOW: MYSTERY, INTRIGUE...

...GEISHAS.

I'LL BE SURE TO KEEP YOU IN MIND, JACK.



THE USS GEORGE WASHINGTON,
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS LATER.

GOTTA
TELL YOL,
EDWARDS...

...FOR A GUY WITH THE
CALLSIGN "SAMSON," YOU DON'T
HAVE MUCH HAIR.

ROGAINE'S
IN THE MAIL,
MOPHEAD

YOUR
BIRDS ARE
READY TO
FLY, SIR.

WELL, GOOD
GLAD I DIDN'T GET
INTO THIS SUIT FOR
NOTHING.

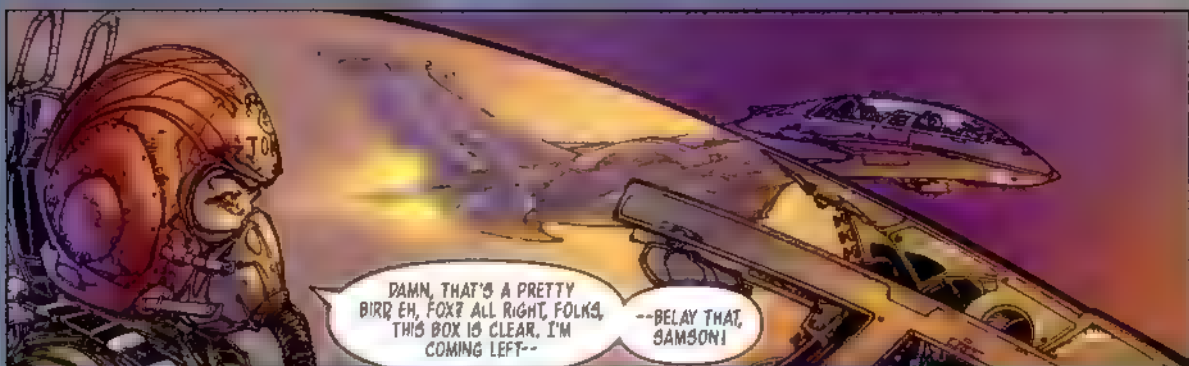
WEIGHT-BOARD'S
A MATCH. WE'RE GOOD
TO GO.

WHAT'S
YOUR WIFE'S
NAME AGAIN,
SAMSON?

IT AIN'T
DELIAM, CHANCE.
REALLY, MAN, IT'S
TIME TO GET SOME
NEW JOKES.

CLT THE
CHATTER, CHANCE,
AND GET TO
WORK.

ROGER,
BOSS.



DAMN, THAT'S A PRETTY
BIRD. EH, FOX? ALL RIGHT, FOLKS,
THIS BOX IS CLEAR, I'M
COMING LEFT--

--RELAY THAT,
SAMSON!

DIAMOND, WE'VE GOT A CONTACT!
IT'S BRIGHT AND IT'S IN THE WATER AT TWELVE
O'CLOCK. COULD BE BLACKBEARD'S
BOGEY!

SEND
HIM AFTER
IT.

ROGER,
DIAMOND

STAY ON
HIM LIKE WET ON
SWEAT, SAMSON.
MACK AND I ARE
GOING
FISHING.

MAKE
A VISUAL
I.R.
JOKER.

MAKE US
AMPHIBIOUS,
FOX.

HAPPY
HUNTING,
JOKER.

CHRIST,
CHANCE, SLOW
DOWN, FOR
GOD'S
SAKE.

O, YE
OF LITTLE
FAITH...

CHANCE,
YOU CAN'T
DIVE THAT
FAST.

JOKER

JESUS...

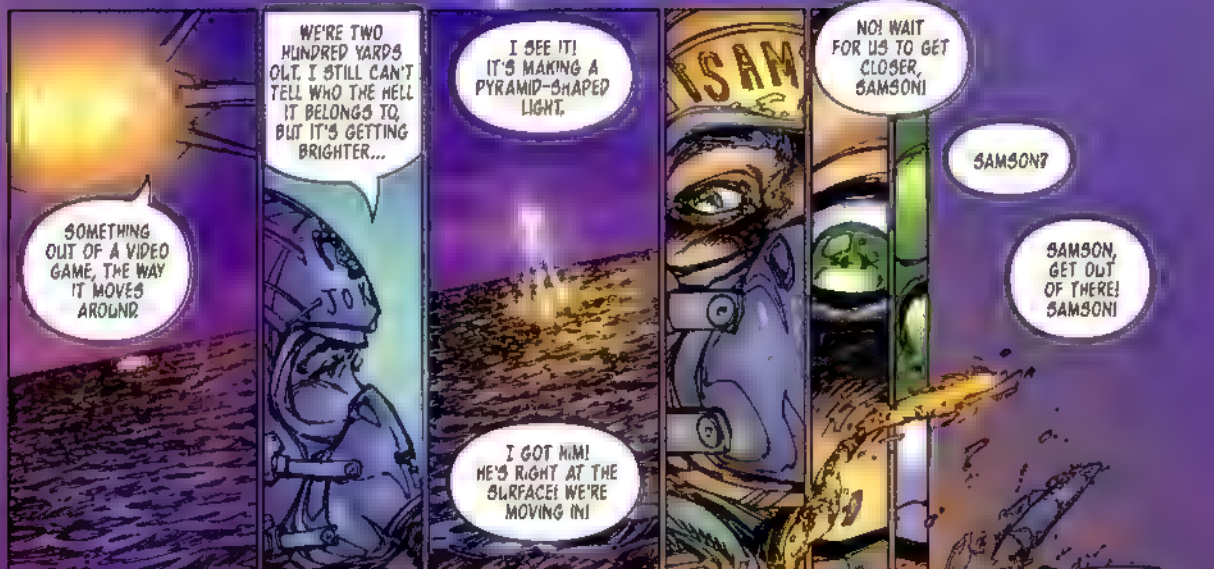
DIAMOND, WE'VE
BREACHED SUCCESSFULLY.
CONTACT BEARING 185
DEGREES.

CAN YOU
MAKE THE
I.R?

NEGATIVE! IT'S...FOUR
HUNDRED OR SO YARDS AWAY.
I CAN ONLY SEE IT 'CAUSE IT'S BRIGHT
AS HELL. IT'S GOTTA BE BLACK-
BEARD'S BOGEY.

WHAT'S IT
LOOK LIKE FROM
ABOVE,
SAMSON?





SOMETHING
OUT OF A VIDEO
GAME, THE WAY
IT MOVES
AROUND.

WE'RE TWO
HUNDRED YARDS
OUT. I STILL CAN'T
TELL WHO THE HELL
IT BELONGS TO,
BUT IT'S GETTING
BRIGHTER...

I SEE IT!
IT'S MAKING A
PYRAMID-SHAPED
LIGHT.

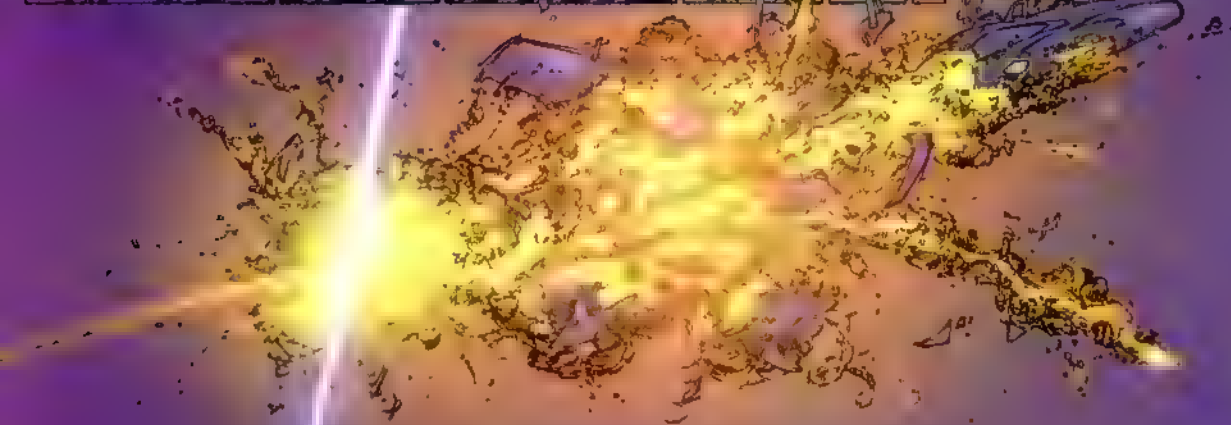
I GOT HIM!
HE'S RIGHT AT THE
SURFACE! WE'RE
MOVING IN!



NO! WAIT
FOR US TO GET
CLOSER,
SAMSON!

SAMSON?

SAMSON,
GET OUT
OF THERE!
SAMSON!



TELL
HIM TO
BREAK
OFF.



JOKER, YOU WILL
DISENGAGE IMMEDIATELY
AND RETURN TO THE
FLIGHT DECK.

DISENGAGE!
HE TOOK DOWN MY
WINGMAN!

GIVE
ME THAT
WIPE...

CHANCE, THIS
IS ADMIRAL MAYLANDER!
YOU WILL DISENGAGE
AT ONCE, DO YOU
COPY?

NEGATIVE,
SIR!

CONCURRENTLY...

UNFLEXIBLE.
ABSOLUTELY
UNFLEXIBLE!

I TWO SUIT WASN'T
PINCHING AROUND MY KNEE
TO THINK I WAS DREAMING

THE SURFACE OF THE CRAFT.
IT FEELS LIKE SHARK SKIN.
SMOOTH, BUT MADE TO TAIL
AND NOT SWIM BACK.

ITS FRAMEWORK GIVES
WELL, I DON'T KNOW
IF IT'S FLEXIBLE.

SO...WHAT? SO IT FLOWS
WITHIN THE WATER, INSTEAD
OF PUSHING THROUGH IT.
AND THAT'S... HMM...
HMM...

I WONDER IF MY
JAPANESE COUNTRYMANS
WAS TRAINING THEM
TO DO THIS.

TOO BAD THE
MOTHERFUCKER
DIED.

LATER...

MS. MATTHEWS?

ONE
SECOND.

I HAVE
SOMETHING
IMPORTANT
TO SHOW
YOU.

THREE MONTHS AGO,
WE HAD A NEW DEVELOPMENT
HERE AT THE DMR ONE WHICH
ULTIMATELY LED TO YOUR BEING
INVITED DOWN.

ITS
RAMIFICATIONS
ARE, IF ANYTHING,
MORE STAGGERING
THAN THE
DISCOVERY OF
THE CRAFT.

LET ME
STRESS THAT
WHAT YOU'RE
ABOUT TO SEE
IS AS SECRET
AS IT
GETS.

AND HE'S DEAD!
WAKE UP, MATE!

IT'S HIM!
FROM MISSION!

HE'S
HEALTHY!

THREE MONTHS AGO,
HE WALKED INTO THE DMD
WITH A BAND OF TEN OF
HIS PEOPLE.

OUR SECURITY FORCES
REACTED FAST. I'M AFRAID
FIVE OF THEM WERE KILLED
IN THE ENSUING FIGHT.

YOU KILLED FIVE
OTHERS LIKE HIM?
WHY...

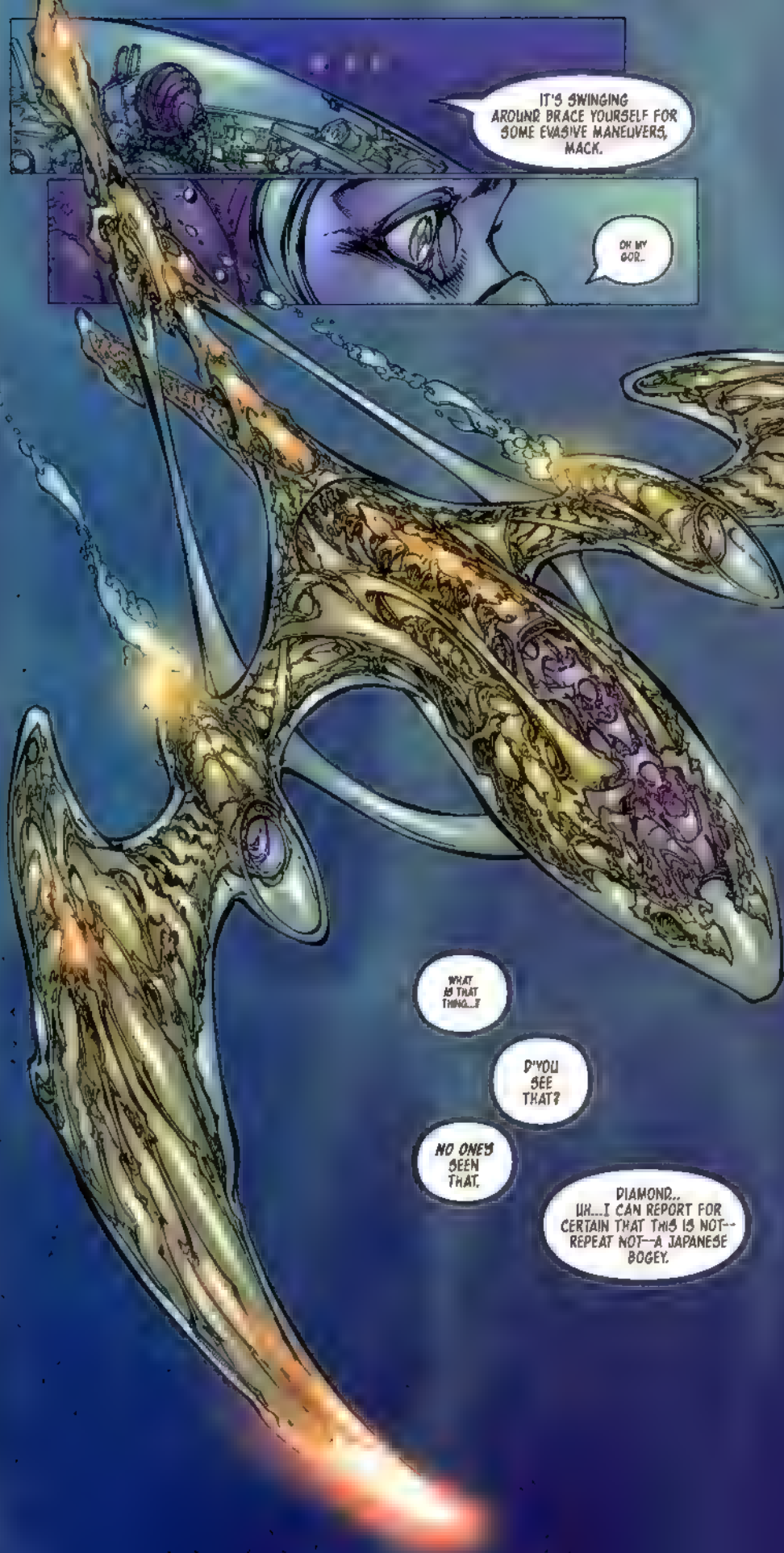
NO, NO. YOU MISUNDERSTOOD
ME. FIVE OF OURS WERE KILLED.
IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST...

WHEN IT WAS OVER,
HIS PEOPLE WITHDREW.
WE LIKED HIM. WE PUT HIM
IN THE TANK, WHERE HE'S
BEEN EVER SINCE.

AT LEAST YOU
HAVEN'T DISSECTED
HIM. I SUPPOSE
I SHOULD GET
STARTED...

YOU DON'T
SEEM TO UNDERSTAND,
MR. MATTHEWS. HE
ISN'T DEAD. HE'S
ASLEEP.

HE'S...
...ASLEEP?



IT'S SWINGING
AROUND BRACE YOURSELF FOR
SOME EVASIVE MANEUVERS,
MACK.

OH MY
GOD...

WHAT
IS THAT
THING...?

D'YOU
SEE
THAT?

NO ONE'S
SEEN
THAT.

DIAMOND...
UH...I CAN REPORT FOR
CERTAIN THAT THIS IS NOT--
REPEAT NOT--A JAPANESE
BOGEY.



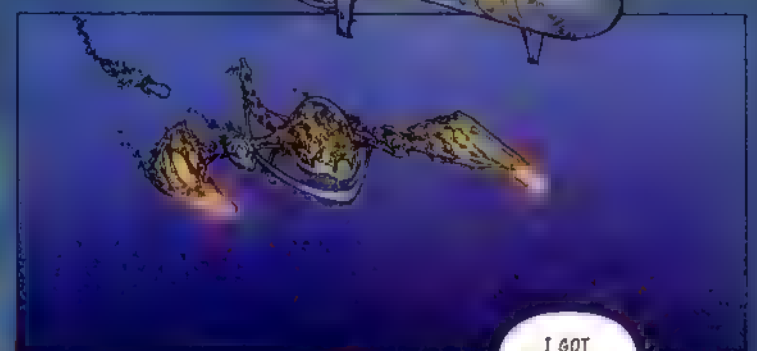
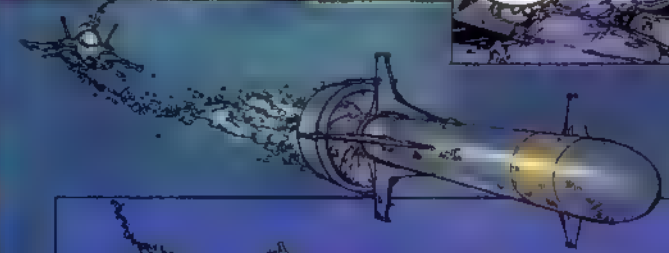
JOKER, YOU WILL
DISENGAGE IMMEDIATELY.
DO YOU COPY?

SOM,
I WILL
COURT-
MARTIAL
YOUR
ASS.

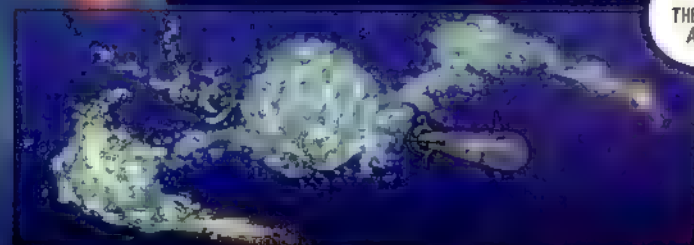


LET
IT GO,
CHANCE!

NO.



I GOT
THE SON OF
A BITCH!



I...DON'T
THINK SO, CHANCE.
I'M SHOWING A
NEGATIVE
IMPACT.

THE TORPEDO
IS STILL LIVE AND HAS
ACQUIRED A NEW TARGET...
A BIG ONE.

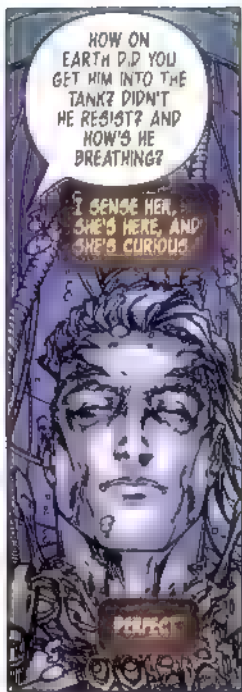


D'AMONG
WE'VE GOT A GODDAMN
SERIOUS PROBLEM
HERE.

WHAT...?
I...

SHIT

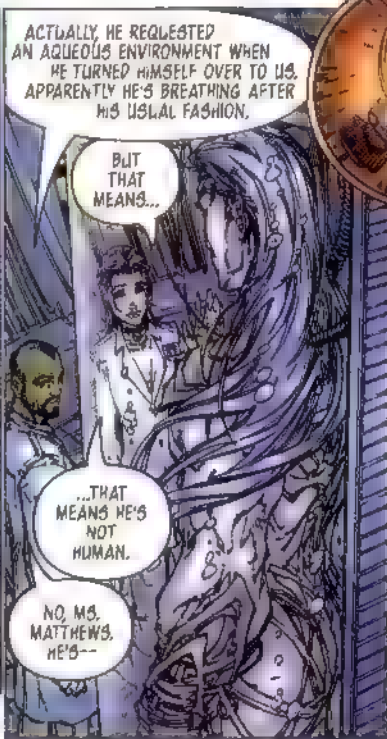




HOW ON EARTH DID YOU GET HIM INTO THE TANK? DIDN'T HE RESIST? AND HOW'S HE BREATHING?

I SENSE HER, SHE'S HERE, AND SHE'S CURIOUS

PERFECT

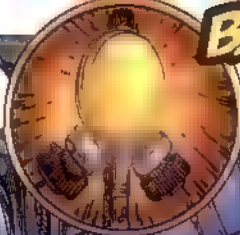


ACTUALLY, HE REQUESTED AN AQUEOUS ENVIRONMENT WHEN HE TURNED HIMSELF OVER TO US. APPARENTLY HE'S BREATHING AFTER HIS USUAL FASHION.

BUT THAT MEANS...

...THAT MEANS HE'S NOT HUMAN.

NO, MS. MATTHEWS, HE'S--



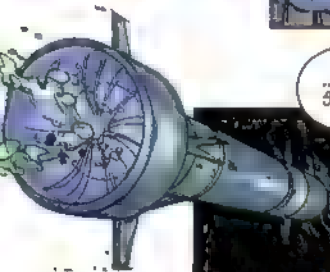
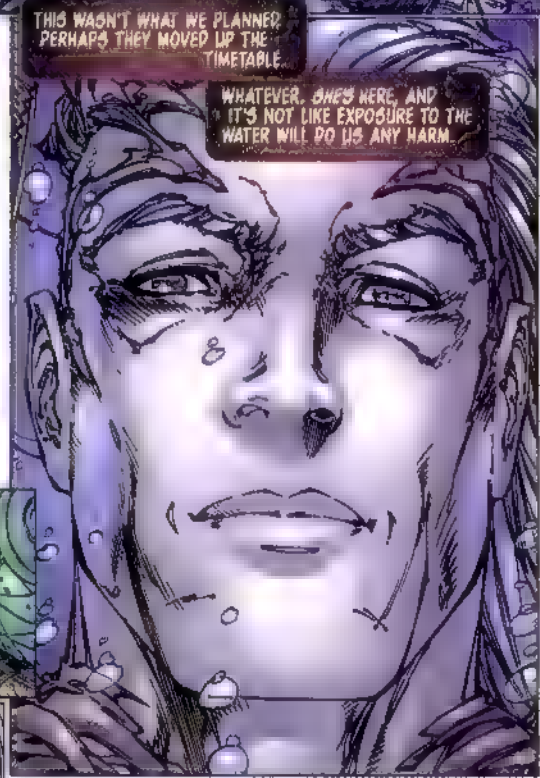
BZZZT BZZZT BZZZT

THAT'S THE... THE COLLISION ALARM?

I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE, DURING DRILLS...

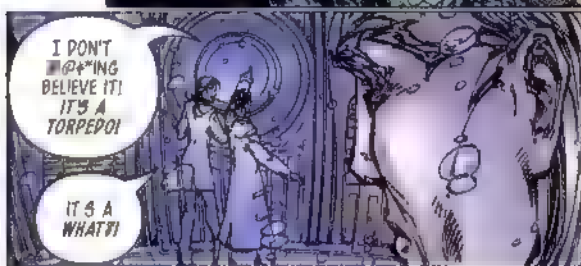
THIS WASN'T WHAT WE PLANNED. PERHAPS THEY MOVED UP THE TIMETABLE.

WHATEVER, SHE'S HERE, AND IT'S NOT LIKE EXPOSURE TO THE WATER WILL DO US ANY HARM.



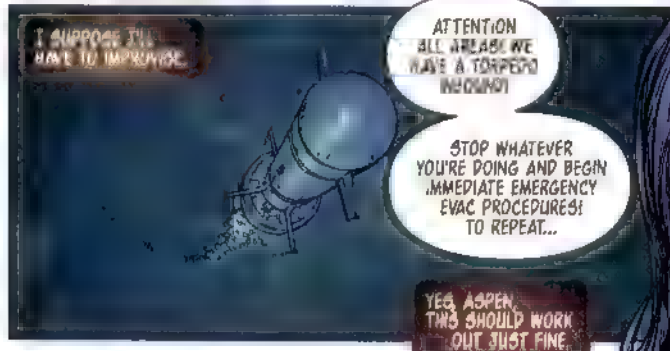
...WE'RE NOT SCHEDULED...

...FOR A DRILL...



I DON'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S A TORPEDO!

IT'S A WHAT?

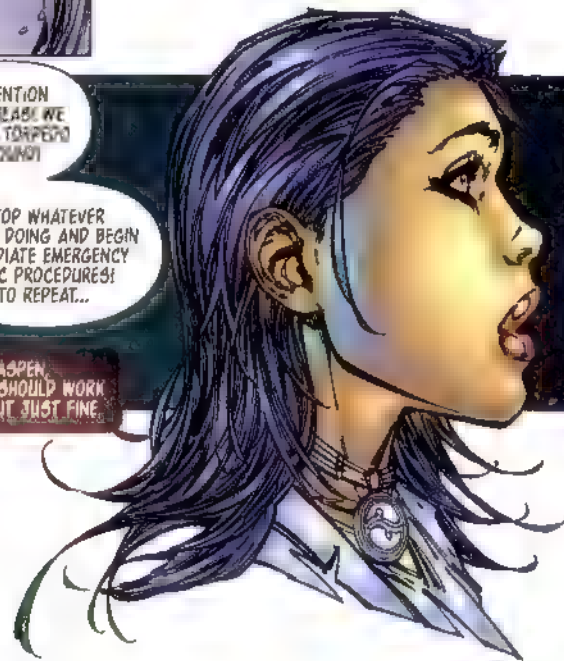


I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO IMPROVISE.

ATTENTION ALL AREAS WE HAVE A TORPEDO INBOUND!

STOP WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING AND BEGIN IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY EVAC PROCEDURES! TO REPEAT...

YES, ASPEN, THIS SHOULD WORK OUT JUST FINE.



TOP GUN

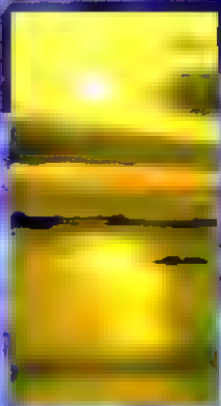


MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM

TURNER
D'NEB
WEEKS
LIVESAY
SMITH



Michael Turner
D'NeB
WEEKS
JD SMITH



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS. Two worlds.

MICHAEL TURNER

BILL O'NEIL

MICHAEL TURNER

JOE WEEMS

LIVESAY JASON GORDER

JONATHAN D. SMITH

DENNIS HEISLER

DAVID WOHL

RENAE GEERLINGS

MARCO GALLI

JASON MEDLEY

NICK CHUN, RAUL ARROYO

CAESAR RODRIGUEZ, DAYNA KELLY

MIAN GREEN, ROBIN SPEHAR

A Big Huge Special Thanks to:

Alp Alfiner and John Livesay

The success we achieved on Fathom #1 would not have been possible without the ink assists. Sorry we didn't mention you last issue.

It's all Peter's fault. Blame him.

TOP COW



FOR
Image
COMICS
UNIT MARDER

MARC SILVERSTEIN : executive affairs
BRAD FOXHO : president
DAVID MOHO : director of creative affairs
SCOTT BARNES : director of production
KATE SHERRWOOD : director of sales and marketing
TIM HERNANDEZ : director of development
AARON CHASE : director of business affairs
BRIAN SCOTT : director of top cow interactive
NICHOLAS CHASE : production coordinator
RENAE GEERLINGS : has a head cold from
ALVIN COATS : special projects coordinator
PETER STENGERWALD : art director

correspondence to: 1223 Wilshire Blvd, #496 Santa Monica, Ca, 90401 E-Mail: fathom@topcow.com

visit us on the web at www.topcow.com

TWO DAYS AGO, I READ THE FOLLOWING ENTRY IN MY LOG. I FOUND IT NOTABLE FOR WHAT IT LEFT OUT.

July 23, 1996. *Atlantis* incident has me ruminating on the power of secrecy.

For background, have included original transcript.

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A MALFUNCTION ALARM! THE STARBOARD PRIMARY HAS LOST PRESSURE!

JETTISON PRIMARY BOOSTERS! REPEAT, JETTISON PRIMARY BOOSTERS!

THEY'RE AWAY! THEY'RE AWAY AND WE'RE CLEAR! GIMME A SECOND, HOUSTON...

ALL RIGHT. WE'RE STABLE, BUT WE'VE LOST OUR VECTOR THRUSTERS. WE CAN'T STEER.

NICE SAVE, CAPTAIN. YOU'RE FIVE HUNDRED MILES OFF COURSE, BUT YOU'RE STILL IN A CLEAN ORBITAL TRAJECTORY.

WE'VE GOT ALL OUR PEOPLE WORKING ON AN EMERGENCY RE-ENTRY PROGRAM. WE'RE GONNA GET YOU DOWN.

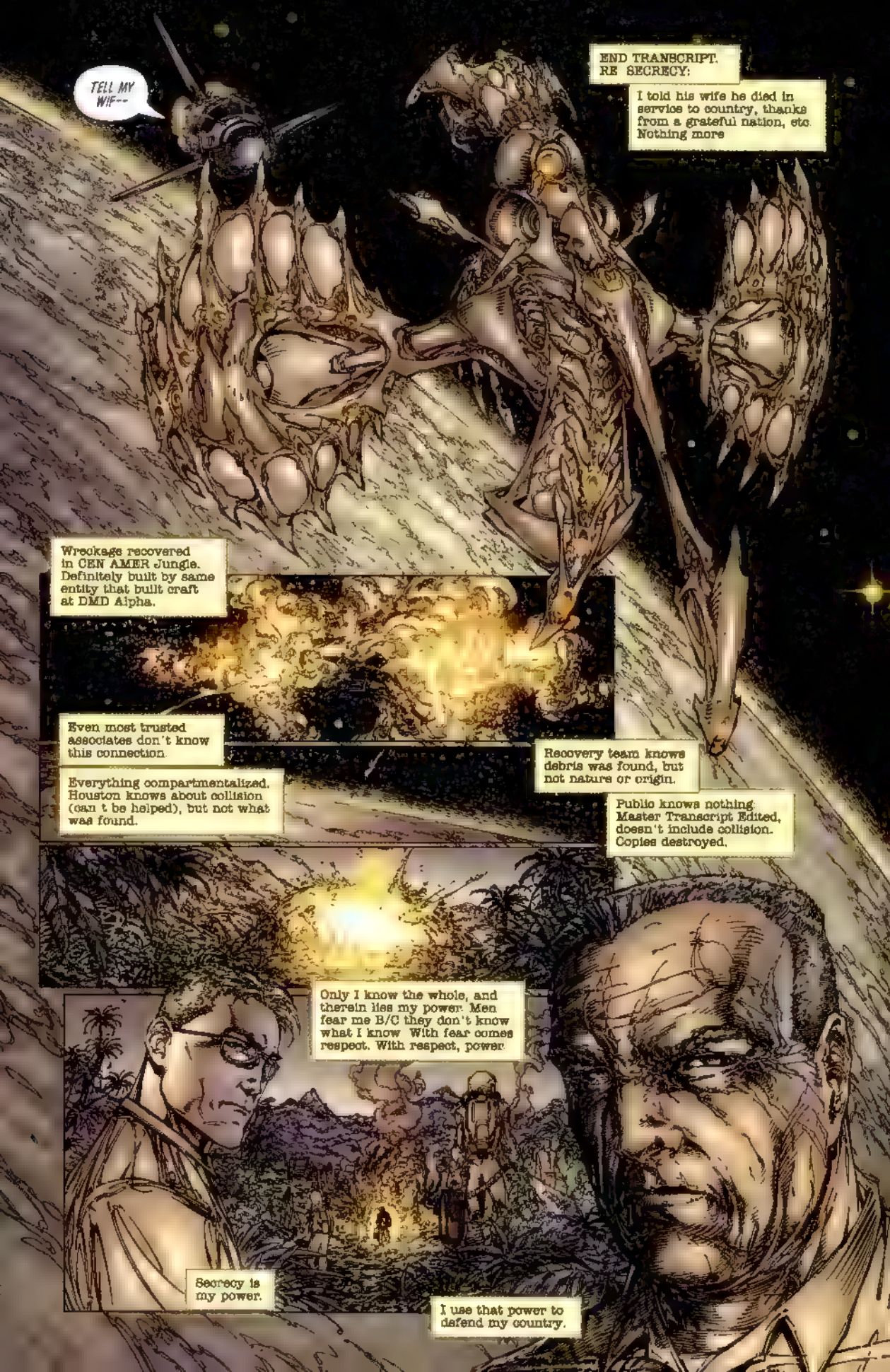
HOUSTON, THERE'S SOMETHING UP HERE...IT'S NOT SHOWING ON THE COLLISION SCOPE, BUT IT'S...

...IT'S... OH GOR...

...WE'RE ON A COLLISION COURSE...

(They were helpless, completely in the hands of fate...

...cannot imagine greater terror.)



TELL MY
WIF--

END TRANSCRIPT.
RE SECRECY:

I told his wife he died in
service to country, thanks
from a grateful nation, etc
Nothing more

Wreckage recovered
in CEN AMER Jungle.
Definitely built by same
entity that built craft
at DMD Alpha.

Even most trusted
associates don't know
this connection.

Everything compartmentalized.
Houston knows about collision
(can't be helped), but not what
was found.

Recovery team knows
debris was found, but
not nature or origin.

Public knows nothing.
Master Transcript Edited,
doesn't include collision.
Copies destroyed.

Only I know the whole, and
therein lies my power. Men
fear me B/C they don't know
what I know. With fear comes
respect. With respect, power.

Secrecy is
my power.

I use that power to
defend my country.

Godam.

DIAMOND
WE'VE GOT A
GODDAMN SERIOUS
PROBLEM
HERE.

WHAT ON EARTH...
LOOKS LIKE SOMEKIND OF
INSTALLATION, SIR...?

IF IT'S
OURS, I'M NOT
CLEARED FOR IT.
ADMIRAL?

WHAT I LEFT OUT OF
MY LOG ENTRY WAS THIS:
I MAINTAIN MY SECRETS
AT THE COST OF MEN'S LIVES.
THIS, TOO, IS PART OF
MY POWER.

I ORDER MEN INTO DEADLY
SITUATIONS. I DO IT WITHOUT
VISIBLE EMOTION. BECAUSE OF
THIS, MOST MEN ASSUME I
HAVE NO SOUL.

I KNOW BETTER.
A MAN IS PRICELESS, A HIGHLY
TRAINED MAN EVEN MORE SO.
TO LOSE ONE IS AN UNRECOVERABLE
LOSS, BUT SOME WILL BE LOST.
IT'S INEVITABLE.

FOR ME, THESE LOST
LIVES HAVE BECOME A
MEASURE OF MY COURAGE.

GODDAMN
BOOK DOESN'T
TELL ME A
THING.

SIR, ARE THERE PEOPLE
DOWN THERE? WE NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT IT RIGHT NOW IF WE'RE GONNA
GET RESCUE VEHICLES TO
THEM IN TIME.

ADMIRAL?
ARE YOU
FAMILIAR WITH
THIS
INSTALLATION,
SIR?

IT MAY TAKE THE COURAGE
TO ORDER A MAN TO HIS DEATH
IS A DAY I WILL CONTINUE TO
DEFEND MY COUNTRY.

TODAY I EXPECT TO FIND
I STILL HAVE THE NECESSARY
COURAGE.

LAUNCH
THE RESCUE
VEHICLES.

BELOW...

I DON'T
FUCKING BELIEVE
IT! IT'S A
TORPEDO!

IT'S A
WHAT?!

A TORPEDO? HOW THE HELL 'M
I GONNA STOP A TORPEDO?

I CAN'T STOP IT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW.

WHAT I NEED
IS A WAY INTO THIS
PLACE. GET TO HER
AND GET HER OUT
BUT ALL THE WAYS
IN ARE GUARDED BY
MILITARY TYPES. SO
THAT'S OUT. TO

I'M STUCK. I CAN'T
DO ANYTHING BUT WAIT.

ASPEN, I'VE BEEN WATCHING OUT
FOR YOU SINCE THE DAY YOU SAVED
ME. THE DAY THE PAKISTANI
WENT DOWN.

SO FAR, I'VE
MANAGED TO KEEP
YOU OUT OF REAL
TROUBLE. BUT NOW
I'M GETTING
SERIOUS.

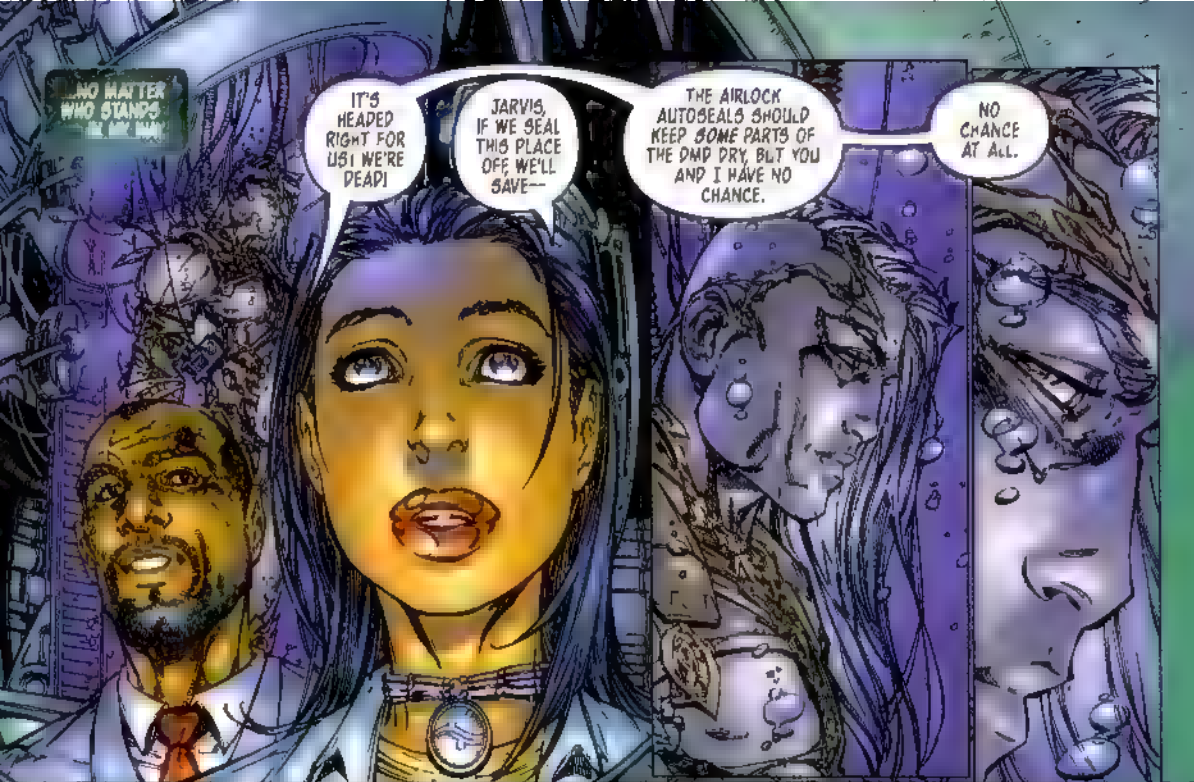
...AND THERE'S WAY TOO MUCH
YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT. YOU
DON'T KNOW HOW TO PROTECT
YOURSELF. YOU DON'T KNOW
WHO YOU HAVE TO PROTECT
YOURSELF FROM.

YOU DON'T
EVEN KNOW
ABOUT ME.

WHEN I FOLLOWED YOU
HERE FROM SAN DIEGO, I
EXPECTED TO HAVE TO DEAL
WITH WHAT'S INSIDE THE
FACILITY.

BUT A TORPEDO?
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED
TO DO?

I'LL PROMISE YOU
THIS: WHEN IT GETS
TO BE READY.



NO MATTER WHO STANDS

IT'S HEADED RIGHT FOR US! WE'RE DEAD!

JARVIS, IF WE SEAL THIS PLACE OFF, WE'LL SAVE--

THE AIRLOCK AUTOSEALS SHOULD KEEP SOME PARTS OF THE DND DRY, BUT YOU AND I HAVE NO CHANCE.

NO CHANCE AT ALL.



IT MISSED L3!

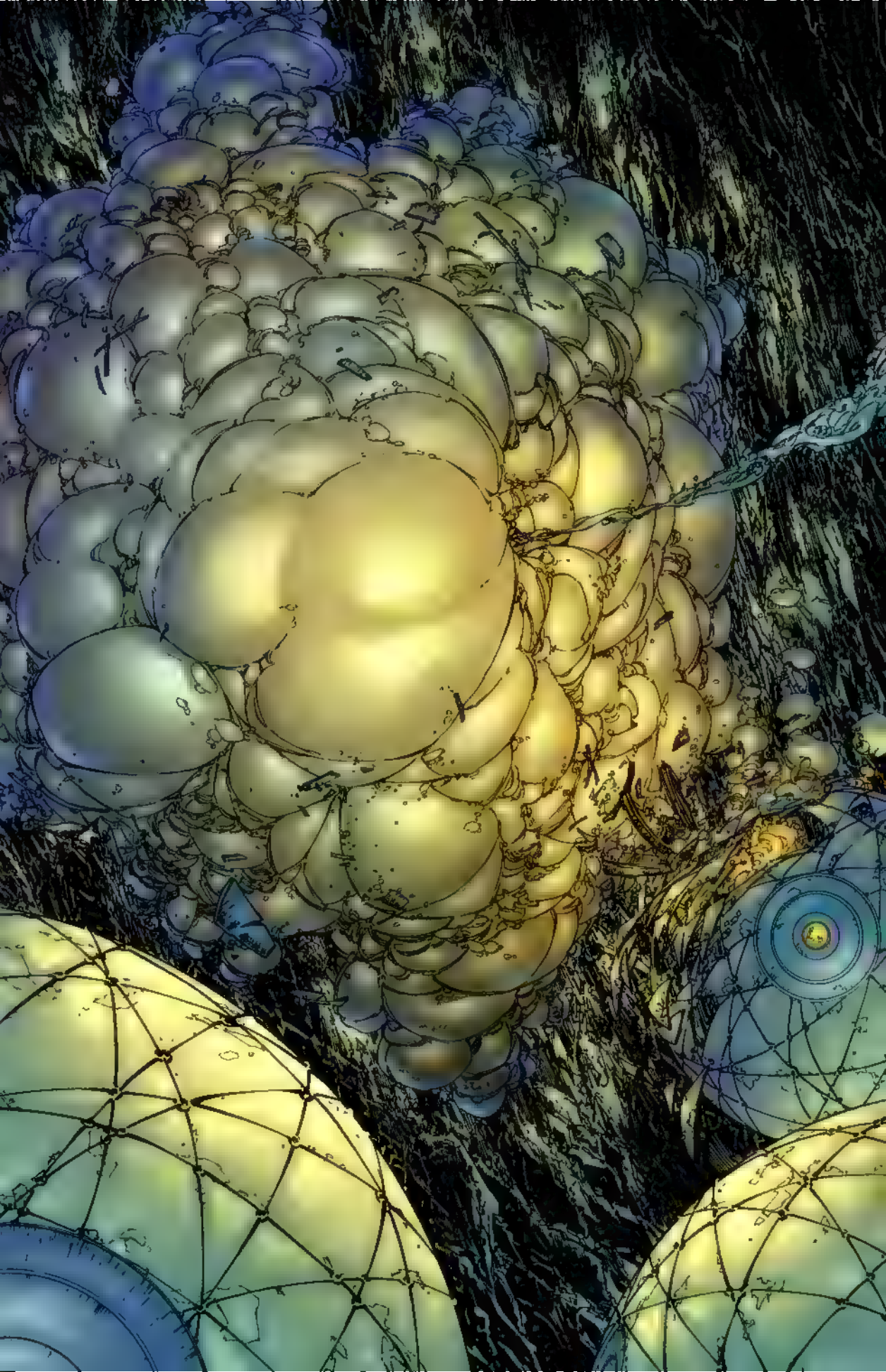
THANK GOD.

OH, OF COURSE. IT SEES HEAT...

...WHICH MEANS IT'S LOCKED ON THE POWER GENERATORS.

BRACE YOURSELF.







"ATTENTION!
THE AIRLOCK
AUTOSEALS
ARE DOWN!"

FIND YOUR
NEAREST AIRLOCK
AND CLOSE IT
MANUALLY!

IF THIS
SHOCKWAVE
RIPS APART THE
CONNECTION
TUBES...

I
GOTTA
GET TO
ASPEN.

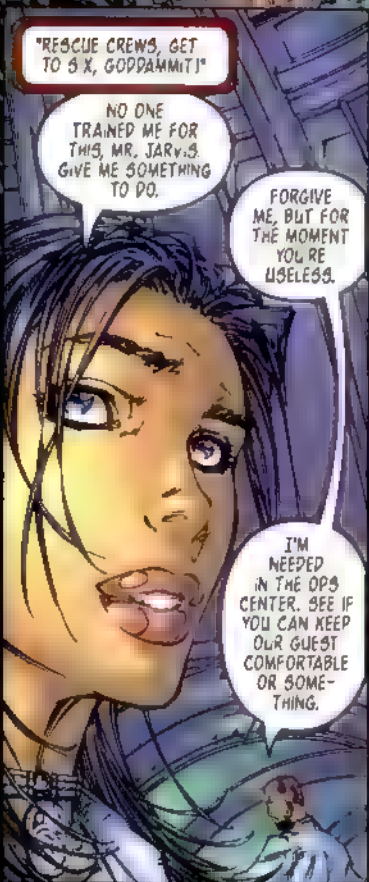


"ATTENTION!
RESCUE CREWS ARE NEEDED
IN AREAS NINE AND FOURTEEN!"

"SCRATCH THAT! NINE AND
FOURTEEN ARE HISTORY! GET TO
AREA SIX! ANYONE IN FIGHT, GET
YOUR ASS OUT OF THERE!"

I'D
BETTER GIVE
THEM A HAND,
MR. HAWKE.

NO, COME WITH ME,
AKIMO. I'LL NEED ANOTHER
COOL HEAD IN THE OPERATIONS
CENTER.



"RESCUE CREWS, GET
TO SIX, GODDAMMIT!"

NO ONE
TRAINED ME FOR
THIS, MR. JARVIS.
GIVE ME SOMETHING
TO DO.

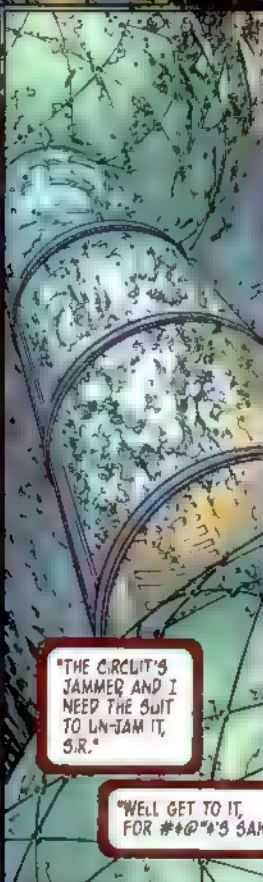
FORGIVE
ME, BUT FOR
THE MOMENT
YOU'RE
USELESS.

I'M
NEEDED
IN THE OPS
CENTER. SEE IF
YOU CAN KEEP
OUR GUEST
COMFORTABLE
OR SOME-
THING.



"EIGHT'S
CLEAR! WE
NEED MORE
PEOPLE AT
SIX!"

DAMMIT,
LEAVE THE
SUITS! I
WANT THOSE
AIRLOCK
AUTOSEALS IN
MOTION!



"THE CIRCUIT'S
JAMMED AND I
NEED THE SUIT
TO UNJAM IT,
S.R."

"WE'LL GET TO IT,
FOR #1@*S SAKE!"



"THIS IS THOMPSON!
I'VE GOT THE AUTOSEALS
WORKING! GET 'EM GOING!"

ALL RIGHT, LET'S SEE. THE CRISIS IS UNDER CONTROL, BUT...

GOOD GOD. AREAS NINE AND FOURTEEN DON'T EXIST ANYMORE. AND AREA SIX. THE PERSONNEL ARE ALL DEAD

WHOEVER LAUNCHED THAT TORPEDO IS GONNA BE IN DEEP SHIT.

DIRECTOR, I SHOULD VISIT OUR JAPANESE NEIGHBORS. I'D LIKE MRS. NIGATA TO ACCOMPANY ME.

THERE YOU ARE! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

LOOK AROUND YOU, JACK. IT'S PRY IN HERE. YOU SHOULD BE HELPING THE RESCUE EFFORT.

WHATEVER YOU FEEL IS NECESSARY, HAWKE.

OH, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU. THE CRAFT AND OUR BIO-SPECIMEN ARE BOTH OKAY.

CHILL OUT, WILL YOU, ASPEN? I'M ONLY TRYING TO...

LET ME START THIS AGAIN.

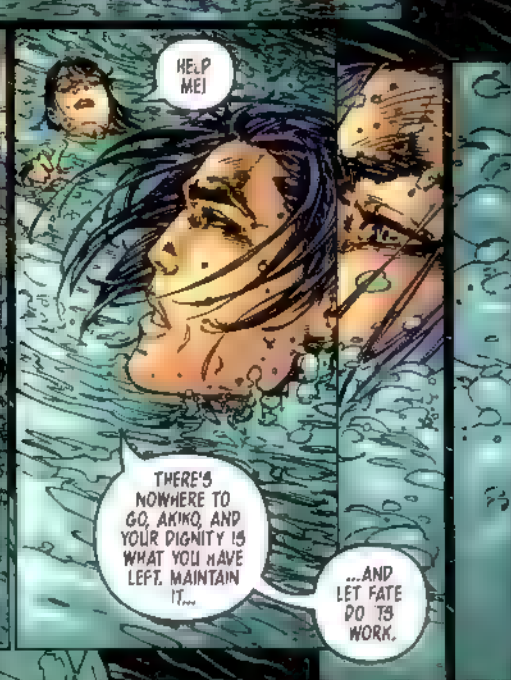
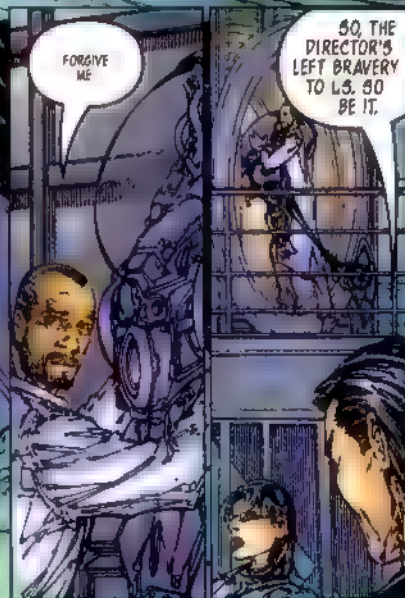
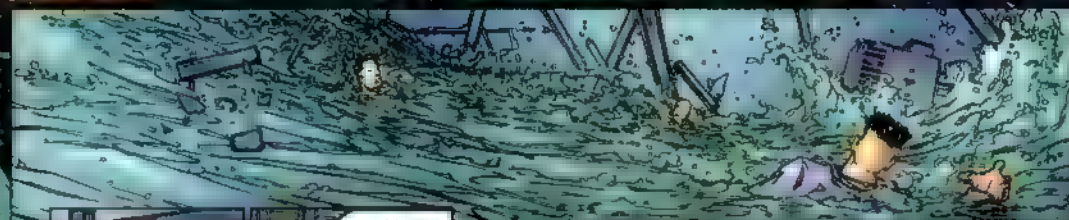
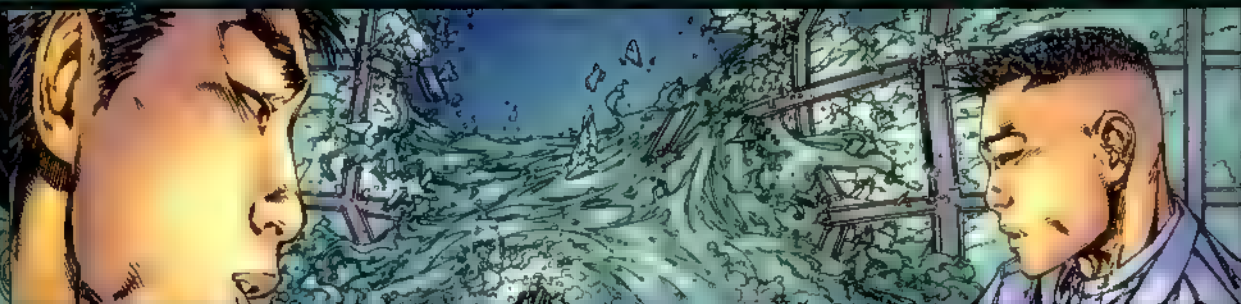
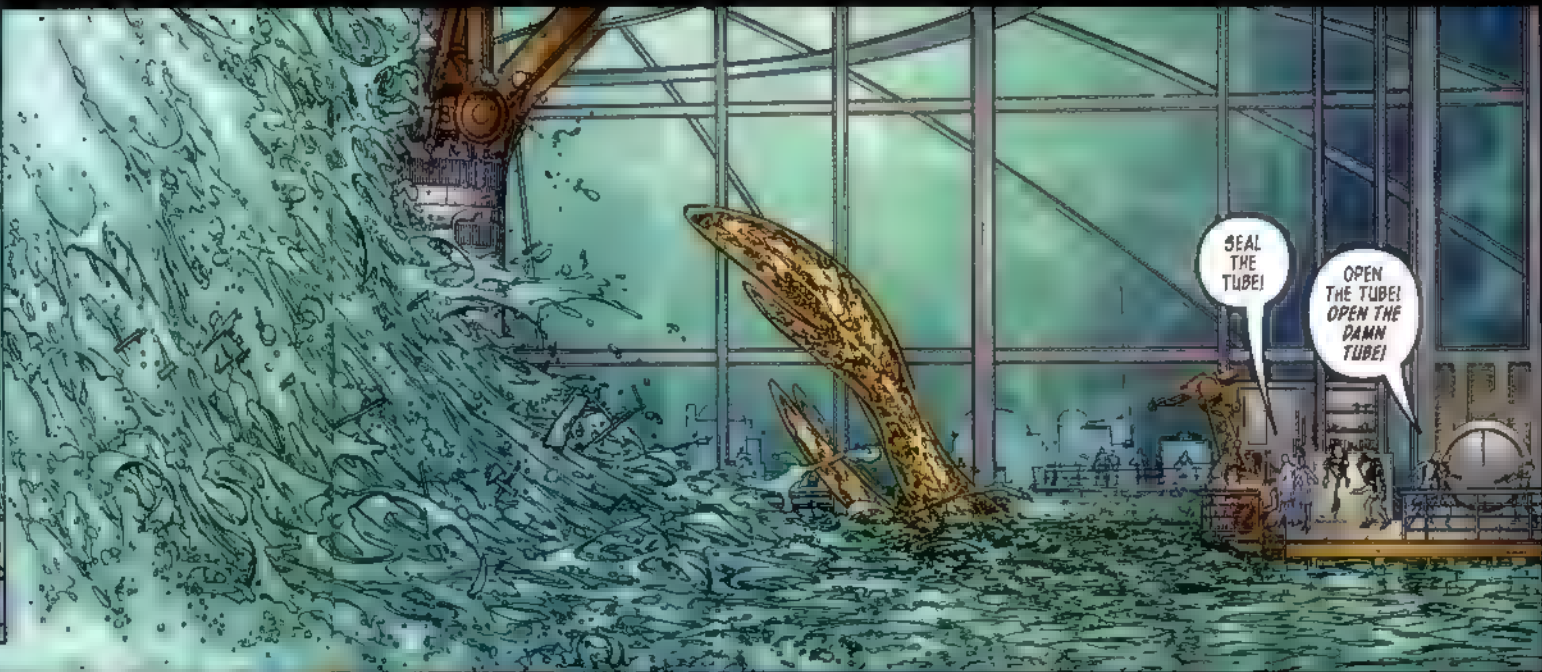
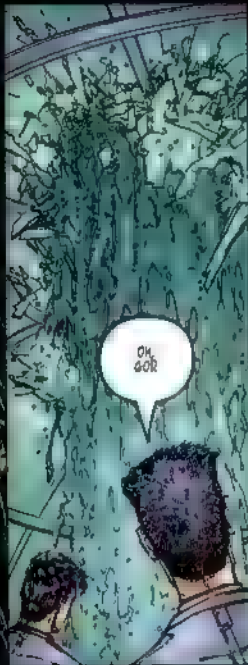
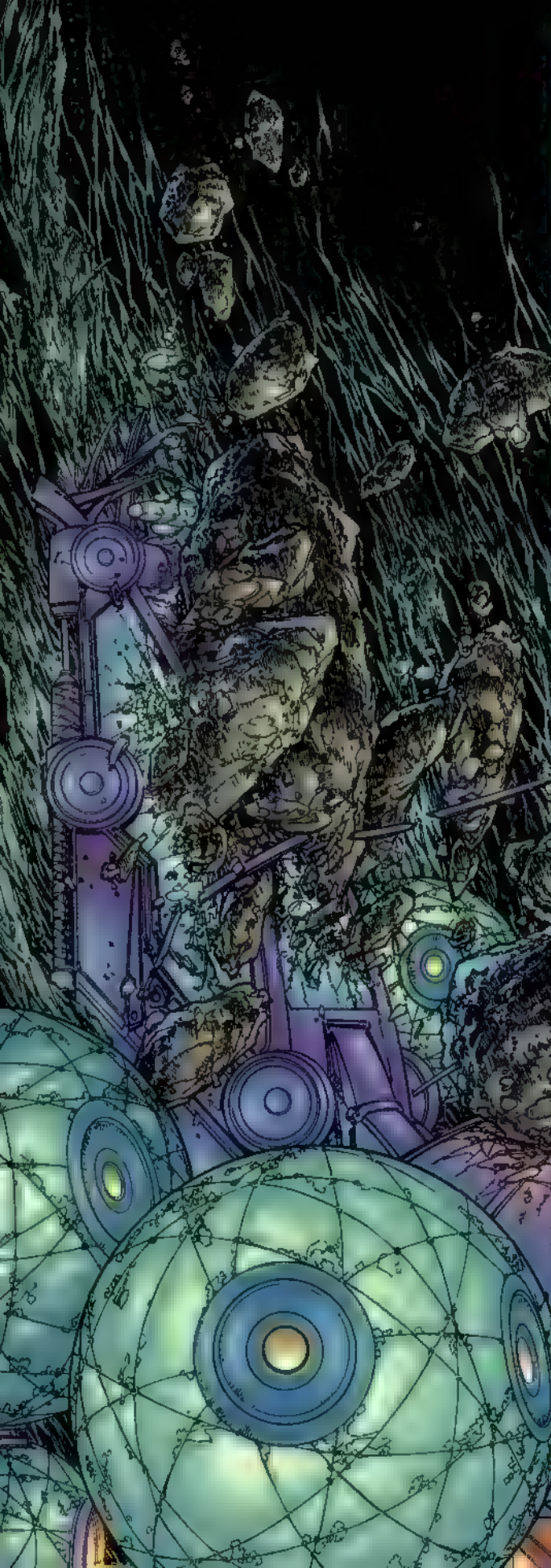
I KNOW I SHOULD BE HELPING THE RESCUE. BUT WHEN THE SHAKING STARTED YOU WERE THE FIRST THING THAT CAME TO MIND.

LISTEN. WHAT I SAID ON THE SUB--YOU KNOW, ABOUT MISSING YOU--I MEANT IT. I ACTED LIKE A JERK BACK IN SCHOOL, OKAY? I KNOW. BUT... WELL...I'VE CHANGED SINCE THEN.

OKAY. TRUE, SINCE WE DO HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER. BUT THAT'S ALL WE'RE GONNA DO. GOT IT?

HMMM. IS THAT A THAW I DETECT?

ICE TO SLUSH. DON'T PLOH IT.





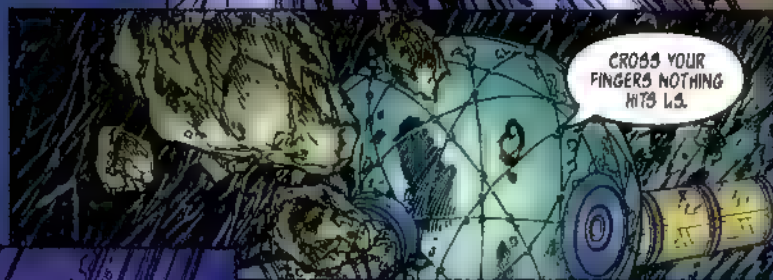
URH!
IT WON'T
BLDGE!

GET SOMEONE IN
THE COMMAND CENTER
TO OVERRIDE THE
AUTOSEALS!

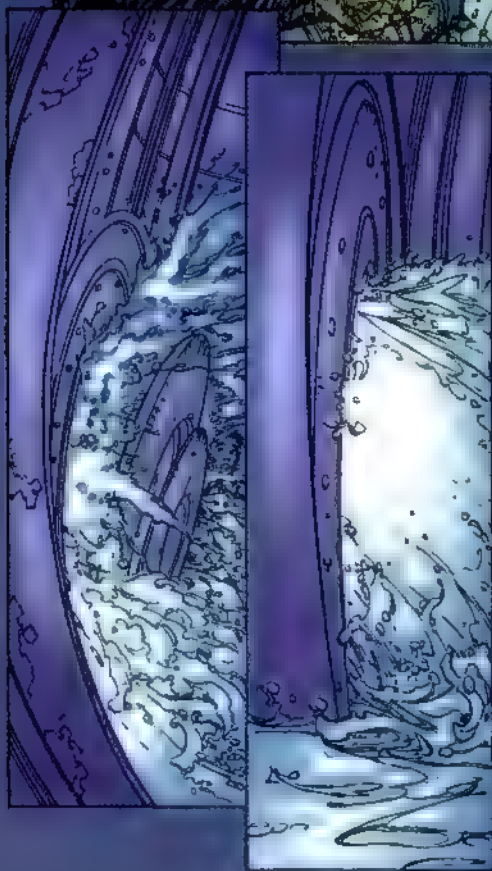


JACK...

...THERE'S
NO ONE LEFT
IN THE COMMAND
CENTER. WE'RE
PROBABLY BETTER
OFF IN HERE,
ANYWAY.



CROSS YOUR
FINGERS NOTHING
HITS L.S.



BAA-AH,
THIS IS
COLD!

IT'S
ALL OVER,
THEN.

DAMMIT, THERE'S
TOO MUCH LEFT TO SAY.
I THOUGHT I'D B-BEEN GIVEN
A SECOND CH-CHANCE TO
MAKE P-PEACE WITH YOU.
AND N-NOW I'M
DEAD

MAN,
THIS WATER'S
C-COLD.

ASPEN, I'M SORRY,
REALLY S-SORRY, FOR THE WAY
IT-TREATED YOU. GIMME ONE W-WHOM
RIGHT N-NOW AND I'D GO B-BACK
AND P-DO IT ALL OVER.

I SAW YOU IN THE WATER
BEFORE, WHEN I WAS YOUNG.
YOU'RE OF THE WATER. THO
DOESN'T FRAMITEN YOU AT
ALL, DOES IT.

YEAH, YOU CAN
GET US OUT OF
HERE.

IF WE CAN
GET YOU OUT
OF HERE.

I-MAKE YOU S-SORRY
FORGIVE ME I JUST C-CAN'T
P-PEE WITH THAT STUFF
ON MY
C-CONSCIENCE.

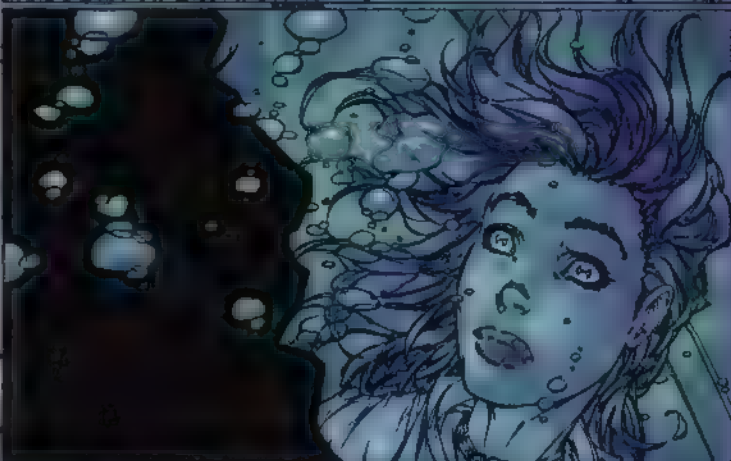
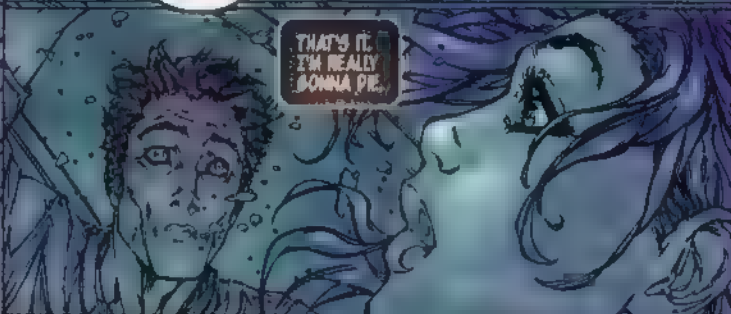
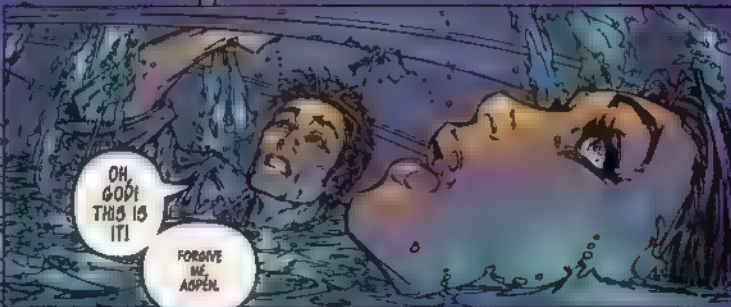
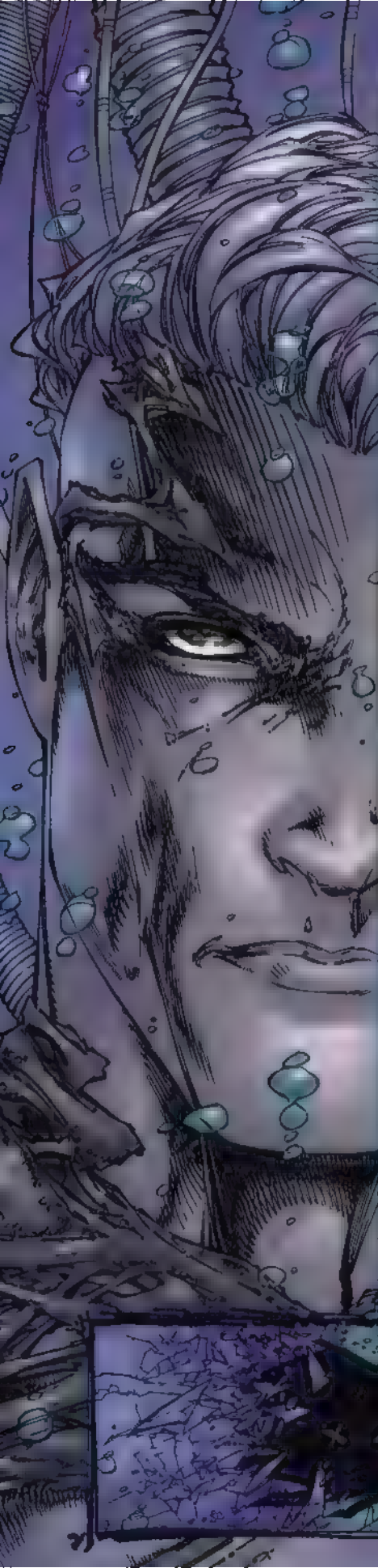
JACK,
LISTEN!
HERE'S
WHAT--

FOR CHRIST'S
SAKE, JACK! NOT NOW!
WE'VE GOTTA GET HIM
OUT OF THAT
TANK!

WEREN'T YOU
LISTEN--WAIT, WHAT?!
ARE YOU INSANE?!
HE'LL K-KILL US!

NO
HE WON'T,
GODDAMMIT!
AND WHAT'S
THE #1#1#1
DIFFERENCE
ANYWAY?

NOW GET
OVER HERE AND
HELP ME!



FLIGHT, BE ADVISED THAT
THE INSTALLATION IS MANNED. WE HAVE
RESCUE VEHICLES INBOUND AND WE NEED
A DAMAGE SURVEY ASAP.

ROGER, DIAMOND
THERE'S A TON OF SILT IN THE
WATER, SO WE'RE BASICALLY DRIVING
ON INSTRUMENTS. WE'LL BE AT THE...
THE WHATEVER IT IS IN A FEW
MINUTES. FLIGHT OUT.

CHANCE.
WHERE'D THAT
SECOND SHOCKWAVE
COME FROM?

I DON'T
KNOW,
MAN.

MAC, I'M
AFRAID OF WHAT
WE'RE GONNA
FIND DOWN
HERE

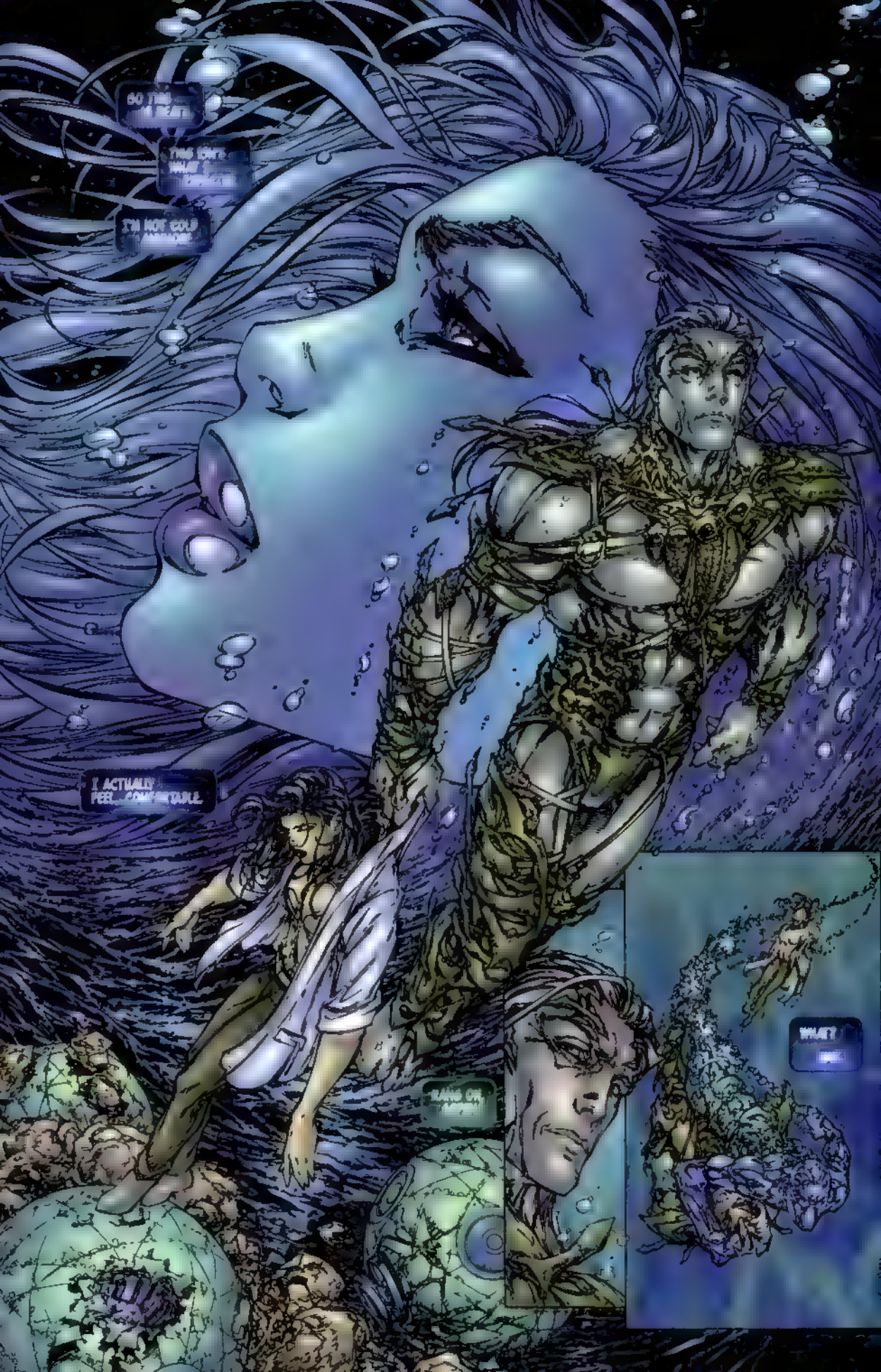
WHY'D
I SHOOT?
WHY?

CHANCE,
YOU'VE GOT TO
SHAKE IT OFF. ALL
RIGHT? PRIORITY
ONE, WE GOTTA FIND
OUT IF ANYONE'S
STILL
ALIVE.

WHUMP?

NO.
NO. NO.

WHAT
HAVE I
DONE?



SO THE
THE BEAT

THE SHIT
WILL
BE

IT'S NOT COLD
ANIMATE

I ACTUALLY
PEEL... COMFORTABLE

WANG ON
ARMY

WHAT?



THE WATER BATHS ME
IN A DREAM...IT'S
A PLACE OF SILENCE...

A THOUSAND SCRATCHING
CHALIBOIDS...AND MUCH
MUSIC OF THE OPRESS.

THE WATER IS SANDPAPER
AND FEATHERS...IT MASSAGES,
IT STRANGLES...IT'S
HONEYCOMB AND AMONGA...

I SEE CHANNELS
IN THE WATER...
CHANNELS OF POWER,
OF PASSABILITY...

THE
WATERS
AIDE

I SEE TURBULENCE FROM THE
TOPPED SHOCKMATES FROM
THE LANDSIDE

AN ANGEL AND
A DEVIL BATTLES
FOR AN SOUL

HE'S NOT
GONNA GET
THE WATER
TO HIM

HE'S GONNA
HAPPY TO HIM

AND I KNOW
HE DOESN'T
WANT IT

HE WILL ALL
YOU FEEL

I FEEL...EMOTIONAL...
CURRENTS...THE RESONANCE
OF TENDER FROM THE MOUTH
PEARS THE TRAPPED PAIN...
OF THE HEAVY PEAR...

AND THE WATER CRY
AND HE'S A...
A...
A...

HE'S NOT
GONNA GET
THE WATER
TO HIM



THERE'S TOO MANY
OF THEM... I'VE LOST
SALES.

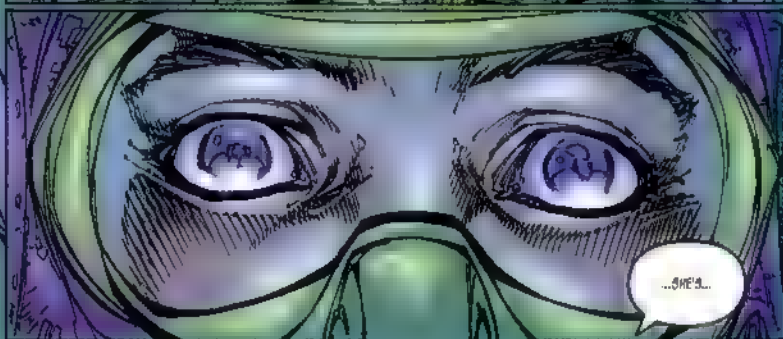
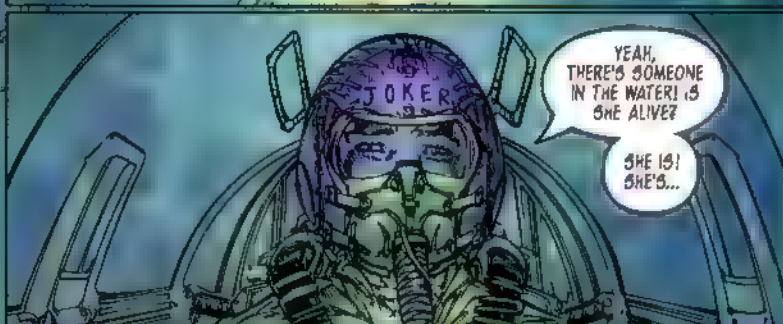
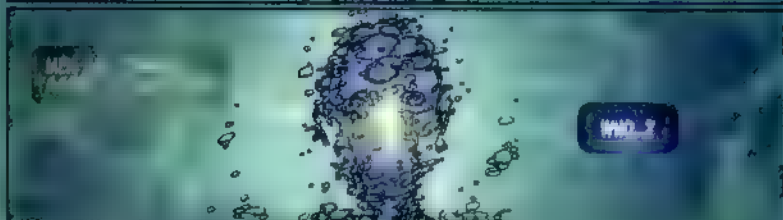
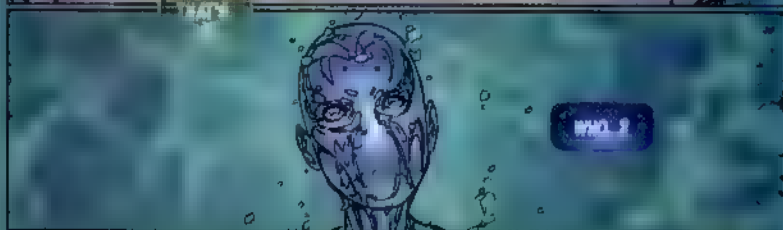
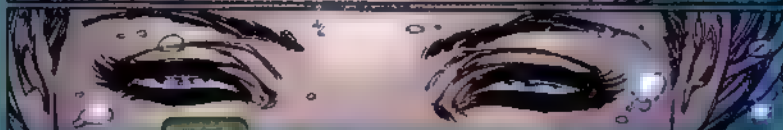
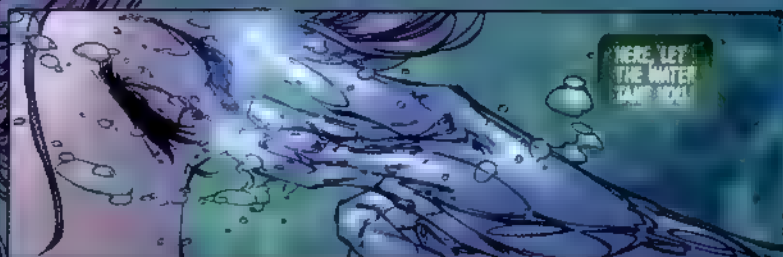
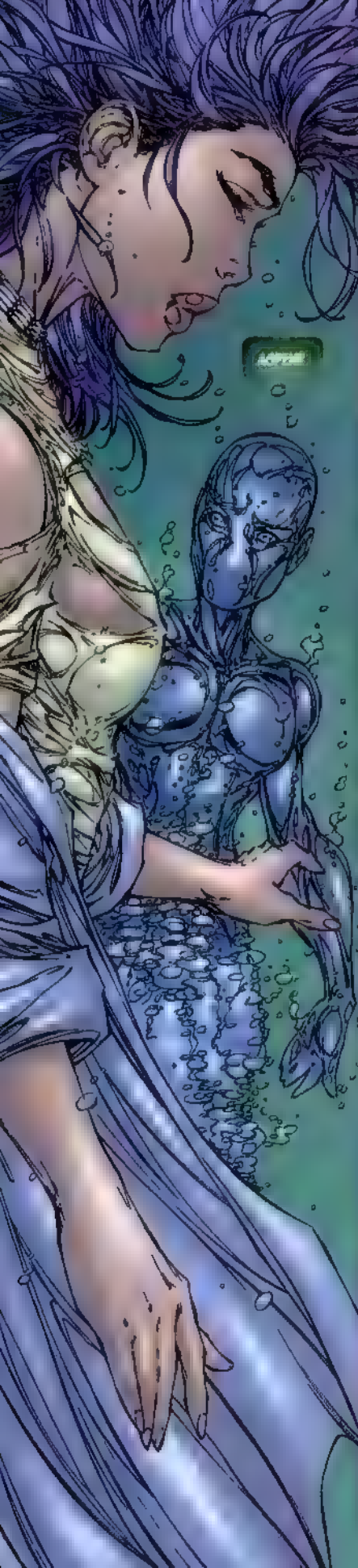
WAIT... THERE ARE
HUMANS COMING!
FROM TWELVE
DIRECTIONS.

AND THEY'RE NOT READY
TO REVEAL THEMSELVES YET.

THEN
YOU'RE GONE
FOR GOOD.

BUT I KNOW
THEY'LL BE BACK.

THAT'S
RIGHT.





...UNBELIEVABLE

O DE CONTINUED



MICHAEL TURNER'S

FATHOM

TURNER
O'NEIL
WEEMS
LIVESAY
SMITH



MICHAEL
TURNER
JOE
WEEMS
JD SMITH

DIRECT SALES



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FATHOM *an imprint of Top Cow*



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS. One above, one below.

MICHAEL TURNER

BILL O'NEIL

MICHAEL TURNER

JOE WEEMS, JR. LIVESAY

JASON GORDER, DANNY MIKI

JONATHAN SIBAL

JONATHAN D. SMITH

LIQUID!

DENNIS HEISLER

DAVID WOHL

RENAE GEERLINGS

KEU CHA

MARCO GALLI

CAESAR RODRIGUEZ

NICK CHUN, RAUL ARROYO

CAESAR RODRIGUEZ, DAYNA KELLY

BRIAN GREEN, ROBIN SPEAR

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FOR

image

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PRINTED IN CANADA

THE GUYS IN MY TRAINING SQUAD GAVE ME
THE CALL-SIGN "JOKER" BECAUSE THEY SAID
I NEVER TOOK ANYTHING SERIOUSLY.

TRUTH IS, FLYING IS
ONE OF THE FEW THINGS
I TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY.
AS A TEST PILOT,
YOU HAVE TO.

WHEN I'M UP THERE,
I'M LOCKED DOWN TIGHT.
WHEN I GET BACK ON THE
GROUND, JOKES HELP ME
BLOW OFF STEAM.

NORTHROP'S PROTOTYPE B-2 STEALTH
BOMBER WOBBLED AT HIGH-ALTITUDE.
IT SCARED THE PISSE OUT OF ME, BUT
OF COURSE I'D NEVER ADMIT THAT
TO ANYONE.

I TOLD THE ENGINEERS IT FLEW LIKE
A DRUNKEN EARTHQUAKE. THEY DIDN'T
THINK THAT WAS VERY FUNNY.

THE F-24 DELTA CARRIER-BASED
FIGHTER HANDLED EFFORTLESSLY. IT
WAS SPOOKY TO FLY, AND I GUESS
IT WAS SPOOKY FROM THE GROUND,
TOO, BECAUSE AFTER EACH TEST
FLIGHT, UFO SIGHTINGS WENT UP
200 PERCENT.

CONGRESS SCRAPPED
THE PROJECT FOR
BUDGETARY REASONS.

THEN THEY PUT ME INTO
THE FIRST-EVER AMPHIBIOUS CRAFT.
I WASN'T THE FIRST GUY TO FLY A
PLANE INTO THE WATER, BUT I WAS
THE FIRST GUY TO DO IT
ON PURPOSE.

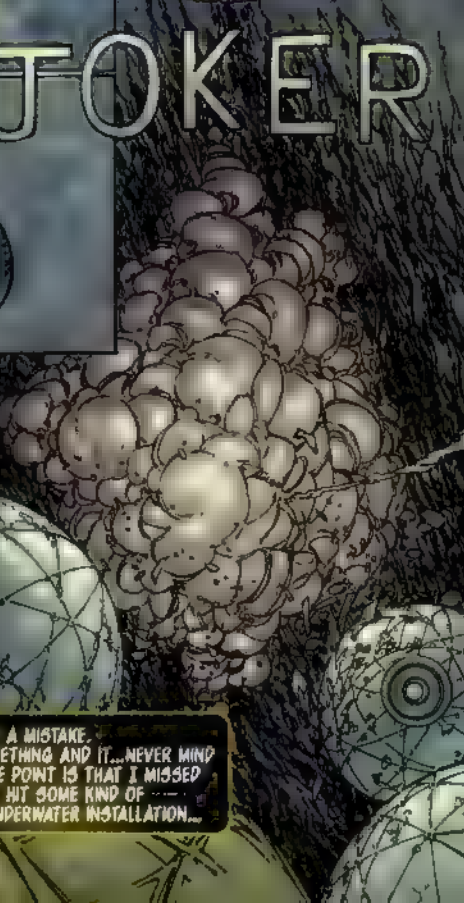
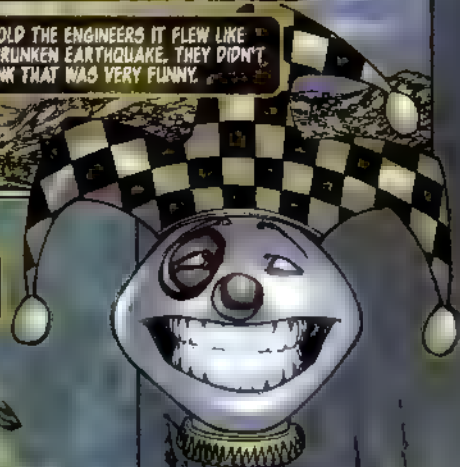
THE TECH IN THAT CRAFT...
I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE
ENGINEERS GOT THEIR IDEAS,
BUT I'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING
LIKE IT BEFORE.

ALL OF THIS MULTI-BILLION
DOLLAR HARDWARE...I TOOK
IT UP AND I BROUGHT IT
BACK, AND I DIDN'T MAKE
ANY MISTAKES.

BUT THEN...

...THEN I MADE A MISTAKE.
I FIRED AT SOMETHING AND IT...NEVER MIND
WHAT IT DID. THE POINT IS THAT I MISSED
MY TARGET AND HIT SOME KIND OF
UNDERWATER INSTALLATION...

JOKER





...AND NO JOKE IS
GOING TO CHANGE
A GODDAMN THING.

MY
CALLSIGN...
JOKER

RIGHT NOW IT'S GOT
A WHOLE NEW MEANING
FOR ME.

THE GENERAL
HOSPITAL
HONOLULU,
HAWAII

KEVIN, TAKE
A LOOK AT THIS,
WOULD YOU?

THIS PATIENT CAME
IN ABOUT AN HOUR AGO,
VICTIM OF A NEAR-DROWNING.
I'VE GOT HER STABILIZED BUT
IT'S WEIRD. SHE SHOWS SIGNS
OF BEING DEHYDRATED
BUT HER WATER CONTENT'S
OVER 77 PERCENT.

A DROWNING
VICTIM, DEHYDRATED?
THAT DOESN'T MAKE
ANY SENSE.

THAT'S WHAT I SAID.
SO I RAN SOME SCANS OF HER.
THE MRI ON HER BRAIN TURNED UP
SOME KIND OF TUMOR, EXCEPT
THAT IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANY
TUMOR I'VE EVER SEEN
BEFORE.

NO, IT
DOESN'T, GENE,
YOU'RE RIGHT.
LOOKS MORE LIKE
BRAIN
TISSUE.

AND HER BLOOD
COMP WAS UNUSUAL,
TO SAY THE LEAST.
HER RED-CELL DENSITY
IS MORE THAN TWICE
THE AVERAGE.

TWICE?

THAT'S WHAT I
SAID AND TAKE A LOOK AT
HER BONE. MAYBE HER BONES HAVE
THE FLEXIBILITY AND STRUCTURE
OF A FOURTEEN YEAR-OLD'S,
BUT SHE IS CLEARLY IN HER
MID-TWENTIES.

HERE'S THE MAIN
THING. HER LUNGS. YOU'RE
THE LUNG SPECIALIST.
YOU TELL ME WHAT'S
GOING ON HERE.

HER ALVEOLI
ARE TINY...WAIT,
WHAT
MAGNIFICATION
IS THIS?

STANDARD
MAG.

STANDARD?
THEN SHE'S GOT A
TON OF ALVEOLI. MY GOD,
SHE'S GOT...SHE'S GOT
FOUR, FIVE TIMES THE
LUNG CAPACITY OF AN
OLYMPIC
SWIMMER.

WHERE'D
SHE COME
FROM?

SOME ENERGY RESEARCH
STATION OFF THE COAST JAPAN,
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. THERE'S
A DEFENSE CONNECTION, SO
IT'S ALL HUSH-HUSH.

GENE, ALL
THIS DATA, THIS
WOMAN...IT DOESN'T
ADD UP OR RATHER,
I'M NOT SURE WHAT
IT ADDS UP
TO.

ME EITHER,
I'M STUMPER...
BAFFLER AND
THERE'S ONE
MORE
THING...

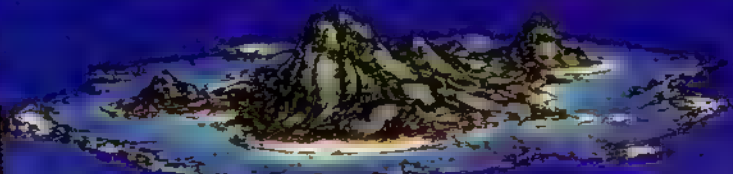
"...THERE'S AN ADMIRAL OVER
AT PEARL HARBOR THAT WANTS
HER MEDICAL FILES.

"NOT COPIES.
HE WANTS THE
ORIGINALS."

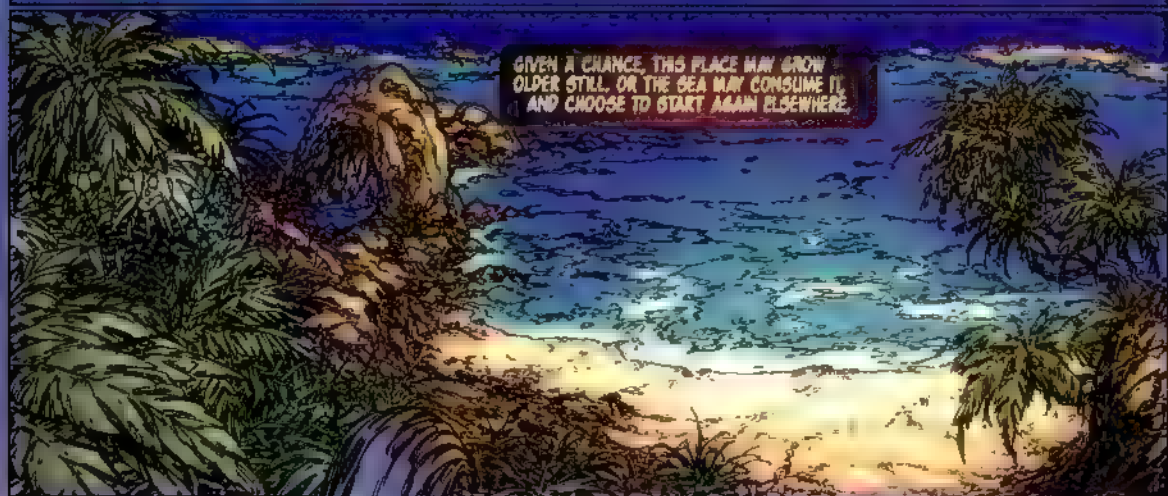


*N*EAR MIDWAY,
IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

THIS PLACE IS YOUNG, GEOLOGICALLY
SPEAKING. YET, IT IS OLDER THAN WE
ARE, AND HOLDS WISDOM TO MATCH
ITS BEAUTY.

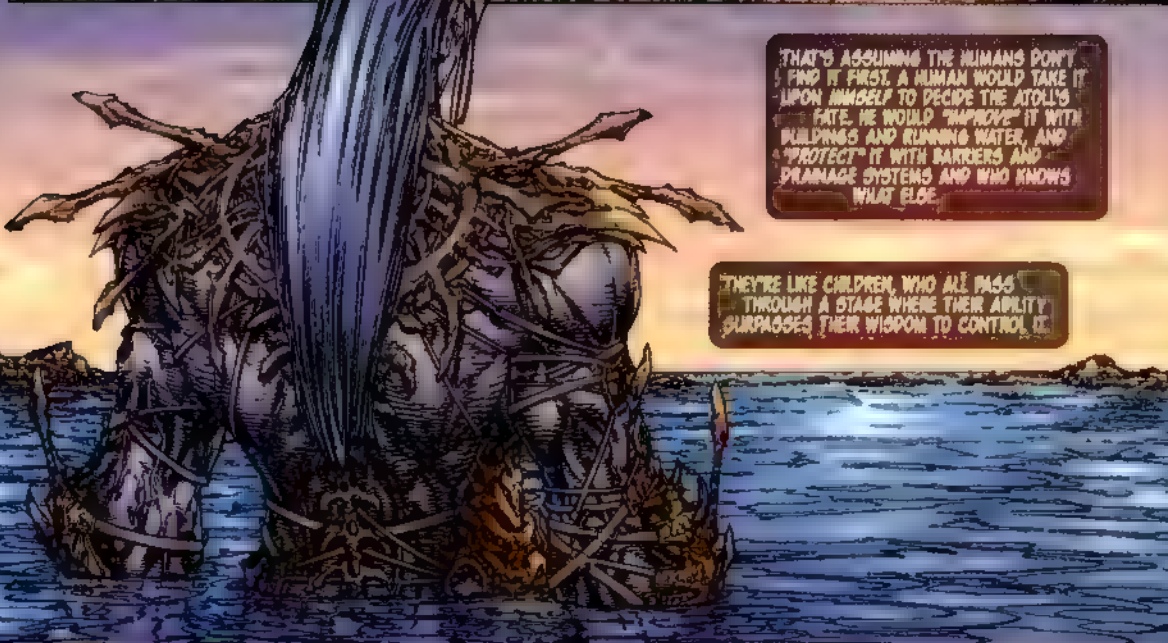


GIVEN A CHANCE, THIS PLACE MAY GROW
OLDER STILL. OR THE SEA MAY CONSUME IT,
AND CHOOSE TO START AGAIN ELSEWHERE.

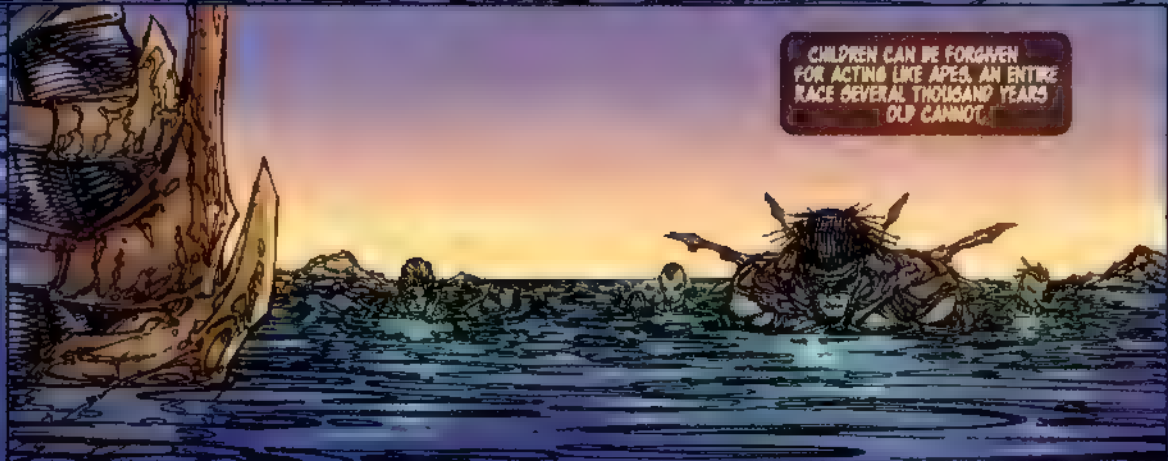


THAT'S ASSUMING THE HUMANS DON'T
FIND IT FIRST. A HUMAN WOULD TAKE IT
UPON HIMSELF TO DECIDE THE ATOLL'S
FATE. HE WOULD "IMPROVE" IT WITH
BUILDINGS AND RUNNING WATER, AND
"PROTECT" IT WITH BARRIERS AND
DRAINAGE SYSTEMS AND WHO KNOWS
WHAT ELSE.

THEY'RE LIKE CHILDREN, WHO ALL PASS
THROUGH A STAGE WHERE THEIR ABILITY
SURPASSES THEIR WISDOM TO CONTROL IT.



CHILDREN CAN BE FORGIVEN
FOR ACTING LIKE APES. AN ENTIRE
RACE SEVERAL THOUSAND YEARS
OLD CANNOT.

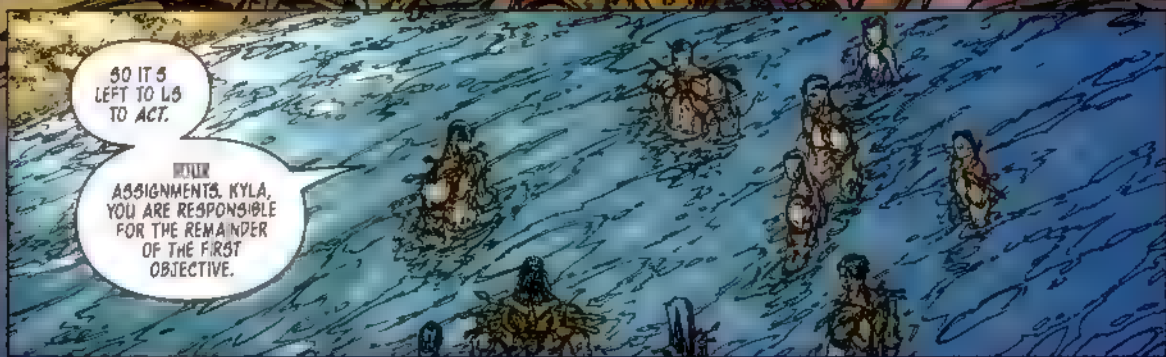




MY FRIENDS, YOUR
WORK IN THE FIRST OBJECTIVE
HAS PUT US ON TRACK. FROM THIS
POINT, WE FACE INCREASINGLY
DIFFICULT CHALLENGES.

I HAVE SPOKEN
WITH A SOURCE
CLOSE TO THE COUNCIL.
HE TELLS ME THAT--
DESPITE OUR
SUPPLICATIONS--

--THE
MAJORITY
ARE
STEADFAST.



SO IT'S
LEFT TO US
TO ACT.

OTHER
ASSIGNMENTS, KYLA,
YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE REMAINDER
OF THE FIRST
OBJECTIVE.

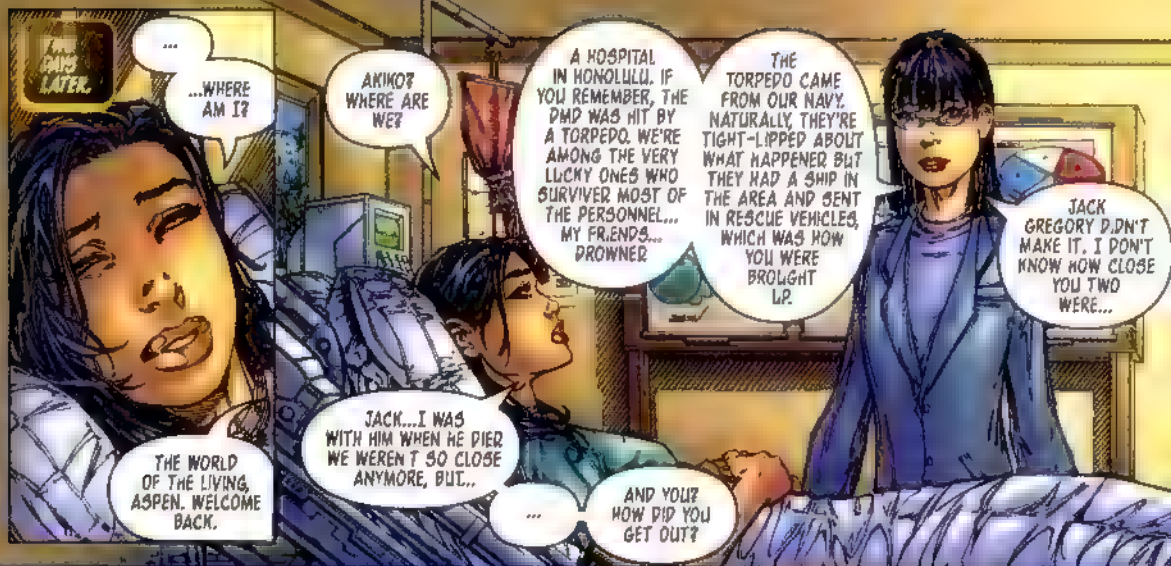


TARAG, YOU
WILL LEAD GROUP TWO
IN THE SECOND OBJECTIVE,
IN THE MANNER WE
DISCLOSED

I DON'T EXPECT
MUCH RESISTANCE,
KILLIAN.

GOOD I WILL
HANDLE THE THIRD
OBJECTIVE
PERSONALLY.

THAT
IS ALL.



...
...WHERE AM I?

AKIKO? WHERE ARE WE?

A HOSPITAL IN HONOLULU. IF YOU REMEMBER, THE DMD WAS HIT BY A TORPEDO. WE'RE AMONG THE VERY LUCKY ONES WHO SURVIVED MOST OF THE PERSONNEL... MY FRIENDS... DROWNER

THE TORPEDO CAME FROM OUR NAVY. NATURALLY, THEY'RE TIGHT-LIPPED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED BUT THEY HAD A SHIP IN THE AREA AND SENT IN RESCUE VEHICLES, WHICH WAS HOW YOU WERE BROUGHT LP.

JACK GREGORY D.D.N'T MAKE IT. I DON'T KNOW HOW CLOSE YOU TWO WERE...

THE WORLD OF THE LIVING, ASPEN. WELCOME BACK.

JACK... I WAS WITH HIM WHEN HE DIED WE WEREN'T SO CLOSE ANYMORE, BUT...

AND YOU? HOW DID YOU GET OUT?

I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE. I WAS WITH CANNON HAWKE WHEN THE WATER OVERCAME US.

AND THEN I WAS ON THE DECK OF AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER, COUGHING UP SEAWATER.

YOU KNOW HOW THEY SAY YOUR LIFE FLASHES BEFORE YOUR EYES IN THE MOMENTS BEFORE YOU DIE?

WELL, THERE WERE SOME THINGS IN MY HIGHLIGHT REEL THAT DIDN'T SEEM VERY WORTHWHILE.

A LOT OF MY FRIENDS DIED THERE, BUT I'VE BEEN GIVEN A BRAND NEW LIFE. I'M GOING TO MAKE IT COUNT THIS TIME.

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M TELLING YOU THIS. I BARELY KNOW YOU.

SHARED EXPERIENCE. WE BOTH WENT THROUGH IT.

THAT'S PROBABLY IT. I REALLY AM GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, ASPEN. LOOK ME UP WHEN YOU GET BACK TO THE MAINLAND.

I WILL.

A BRAND NEW LIFE. I GUESS I'VE BEEN GIVEN THE SAME THING. I ALMOST DROWNER MAYBE I DID DROWN. BUT HERE I AM, STILL BREATHING.

I MUST HAVE BEEN HALLUCINATING WHEN THE OCEAN TALKED TO ME, RIGHT? THE OCEAN DOESN'T TALK.

I DON'T KNOW, THOUGH. IT SEEMED PRETTY REAL TO ME.

I DON'T KNOW.



PEARL HARBOR
NAVAL BASE.

THAT WAS SUPPOSED
TO BE A GODDAMN TEST
FLIGHT, FOR ***'S
SAKE!



YOU CAUSED
THE DEATHS OF NEARLY
A HUNDRED PERSONNEL,
AND YOU DESTROYED
A TOP SECRET
FACILITY!

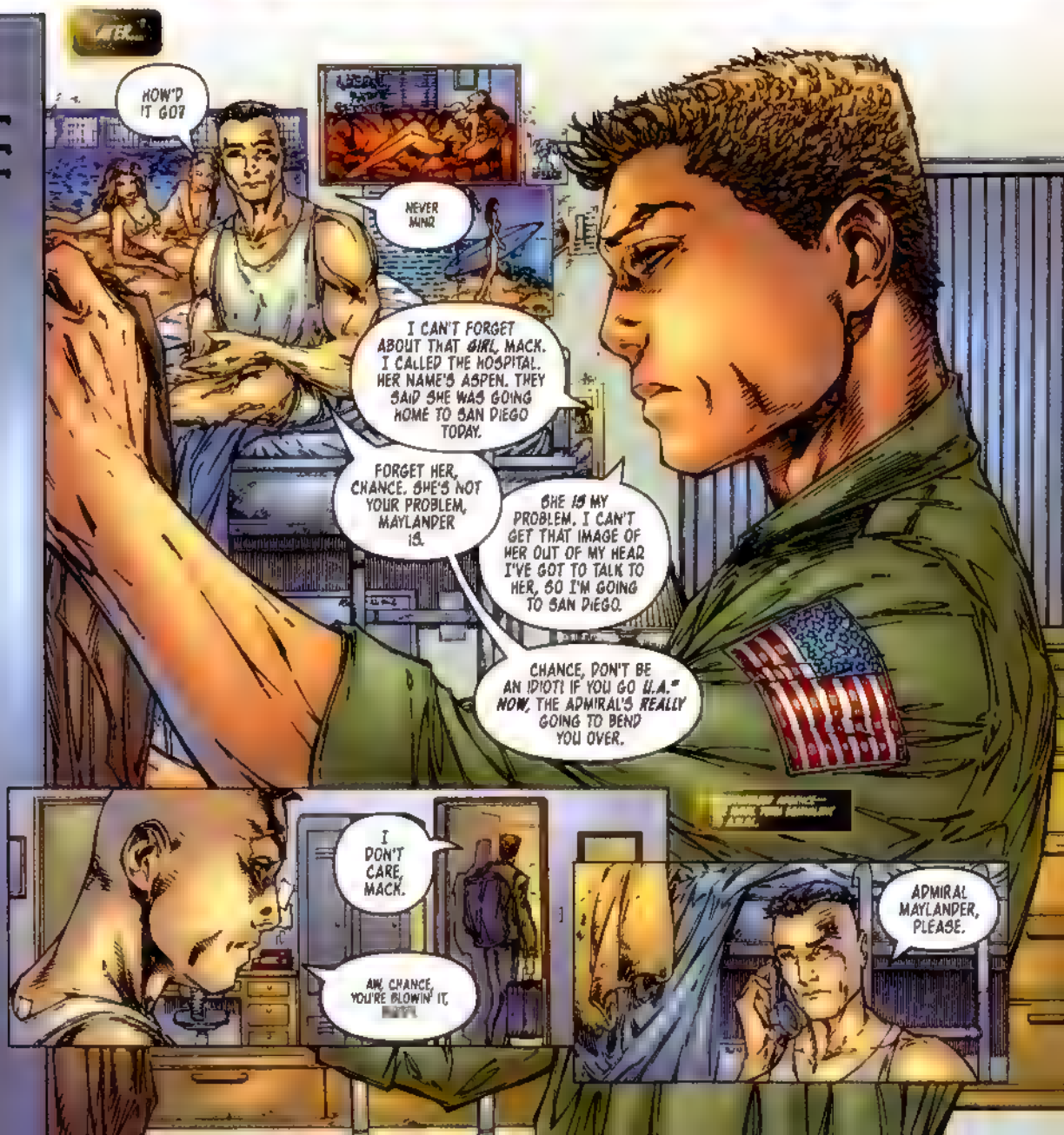
AND YOU
DISOBEYED MY
GODDAMNED
DIRECT
ORDER!

I DO NOT TOLERATE
INSUBORDINATION! NOT FROM
ENLISTED MEN, NOT FROM OFFICERS,
AND ESPECIALLY NOT FROM
GODDAMNED PISS-ANT
PILOTS!

NOW GET
THE HELL OUT OF
MY OFFICE!



YOU'RE
GROUNDED
UNTIL
FURTHER
NOTICE.



HOW'D
IT GO?

NEVER
MIND

I CAN'T FORGET
ABOUT THAT GIRL, MACK.
I CALLED THE HOSPITAL.
HER NAME'S ASPEN. THEY
SAID SHE WAS GOING
HOME TO SAN DIEGO
TODAY.

FORGET HER,
CHANCE. SHE'S NOT
YOUR PROBLEM,
MAYLANDER
IS.

SHE IS MY
PROBLEM. I CAN'T
GET THAT IMAGE OF
HER OUT OF MY HEAD
I'VE GOT TO TALK TO
HER, SO I'M GOING
TO SAN DIEGO.

CHANCE, DON'T BE
AN IDIOT! IF YOU GO U.A.*
NOW, THE ADMIRAL'S REALLY
GOING TO BEND
YOU OVER.

I
DON'T
CARE,
MACK.

AM, CHANCE,
YOU'RE BLOWIN' IT
MACK!

ADMIRAL
MAYLANDER,
PLEASE.



YES.

I SEE.

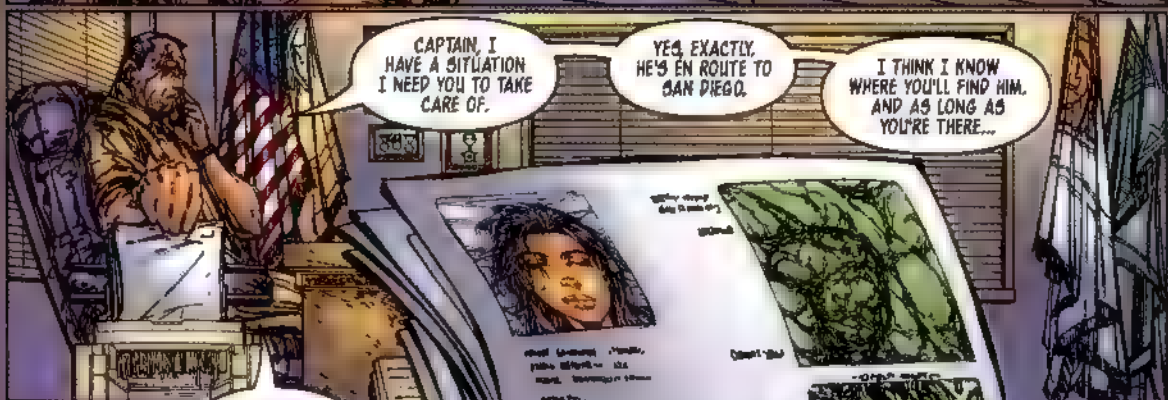
THANK YOU.

ADMIRAL MAYLANDER



JUDITH,
GET ME CAPTAIN
CALLOWAY,
PLEASE.

YES,
SIR.

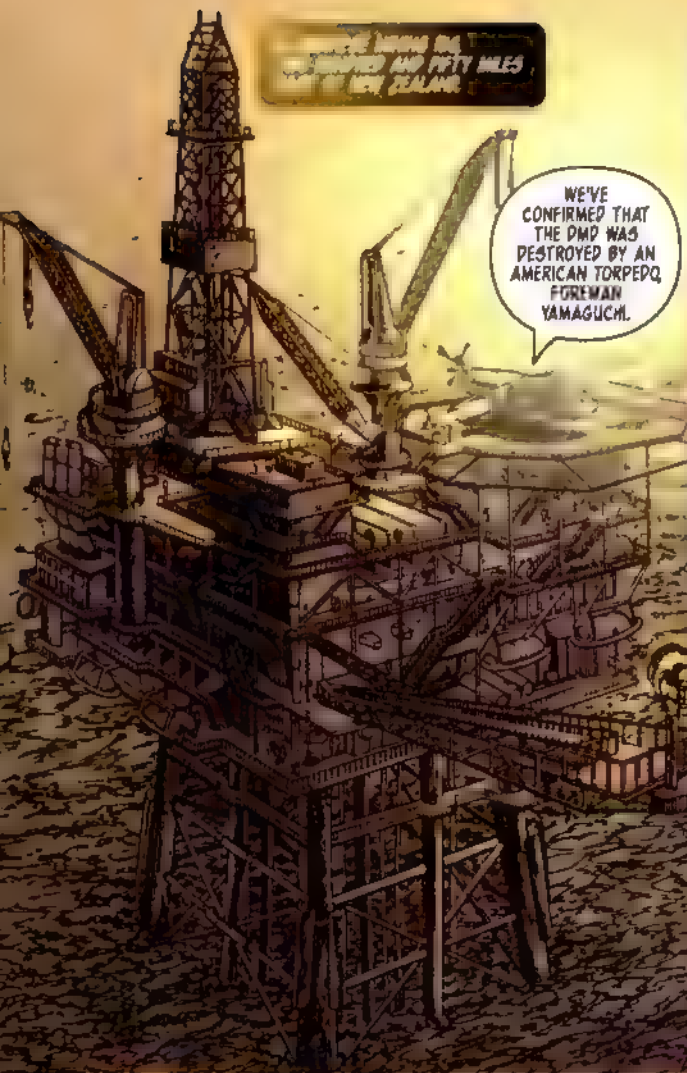


CAPTAIN, I
HAVE A SITUATION
I NEED YOU TO TAKE
CARE OF.

YES, EXACTLY.
HE'S EN ROUTE TO
SAN DIEGO.

I THINK I KNOW
WHERE YOU'LL FIND HIM.
AND AS LONG AS
YOU'RE THERE...

...THERE'S
SOMEONE ELSE
I'D LIKE YOU TO
TALK TO.



WE'VE
CONFIRMED THAT
THE DMP WAS
DESTROYED BY AN
AMERICAN TORPEDO
FOREMAN
YAMAGUCHI.

IT'S POSSIBLE
THEY MADE GREAT
ADVANCES IN
THEIR RESEARCH OF
THE CRAFT, SO
THEY NO LONGER
FELT THE NEED
TO STUDY IT...

...IN WHICH
CASE THEY DESTROYED
THE FACILITY TO PREVENT
US FROM STUDYING IT
FURTHER AND CATCHING
UP WITH THEM.

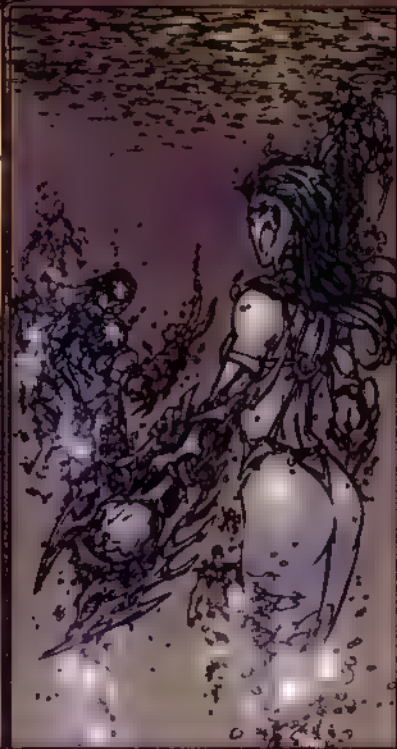
THIS IS OUR
WORKING THEORY,
UNTIL SOMETHING MORE
PLAUSIBLE SUGGESTS
ITSELF UNFORTUNATELY,
OUR SOURCE ON THE
AMERICAN SIDE IS
MISSING.

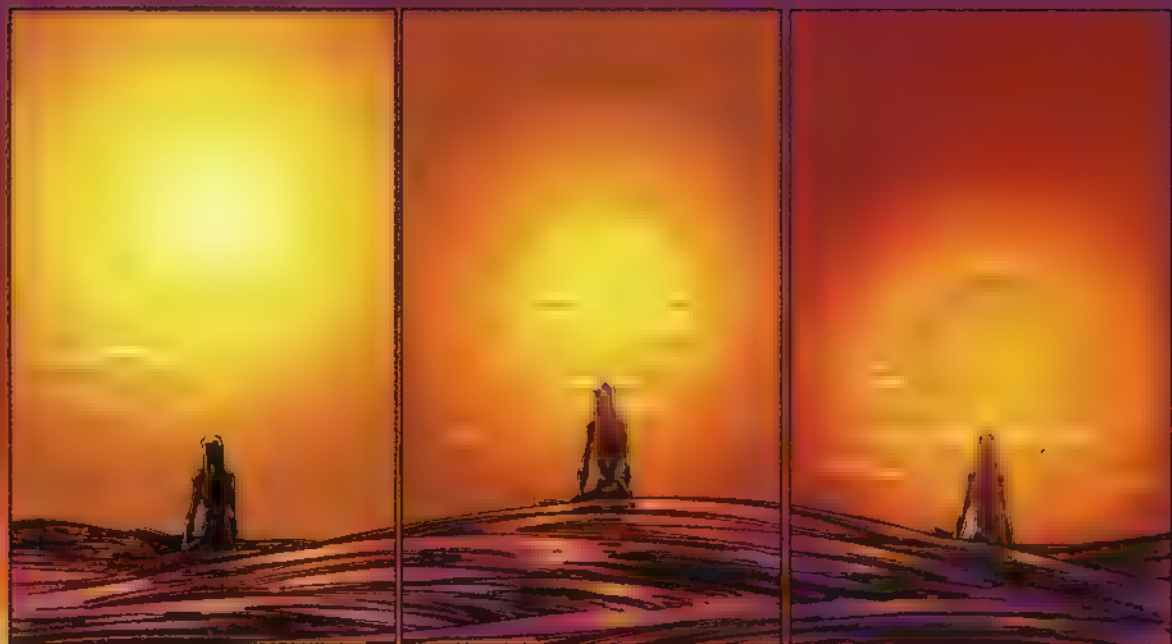
IN ANY EVENT,
YOU HERE ON THE
PLATFORM NEED TO BE
ON YOUR GUARD AGAINST
A SIMILAR ATTACK. AND
IN THE MEANTIME,
CONTINUE YOUR
EXTRACTIONS. WE WILL
SHORTLY BE NEEDING
MANY TONS OF
FUEL.



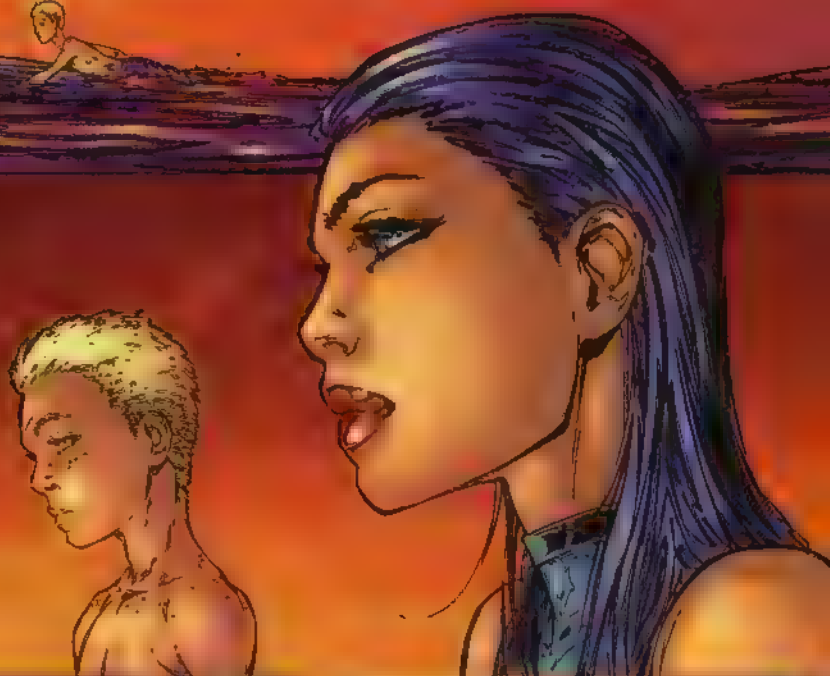
I UNDER-
STAND THANK
YOU FOR TAKING
THE TIME.

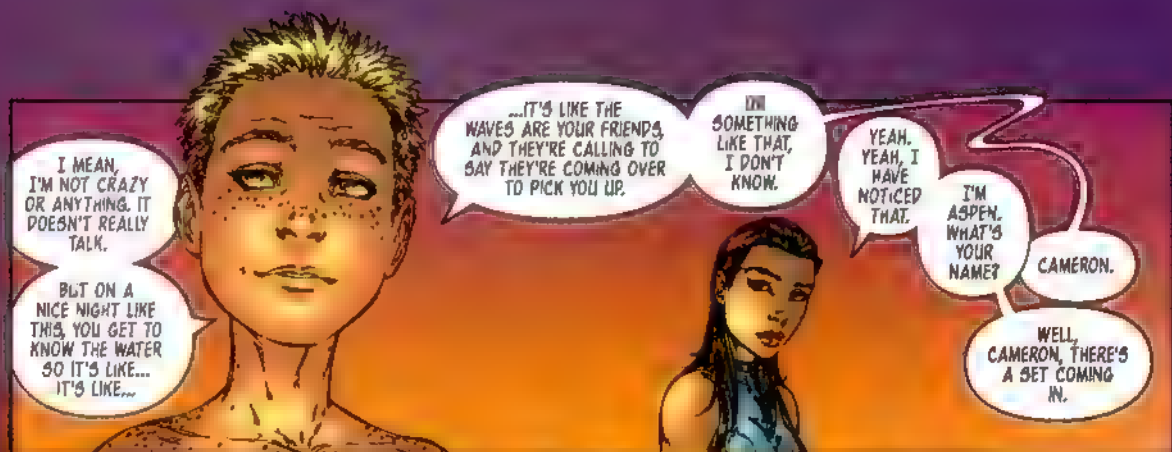
HAVE
A SAFE
FLIGHT.





YOU EVER
NOTICE WHEN YOU'RE
OUT HERE, SOMETIMES
IT'S LIKE THE OCEAN'S
TALKING TO
YOU?

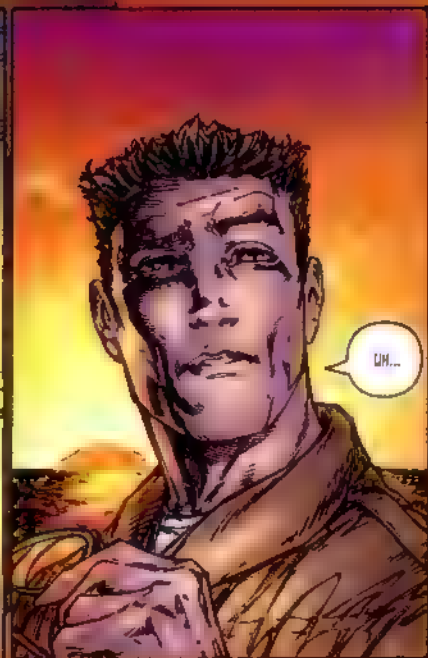






I'M A PILOT
WITH THE U.S. NAVY.
MY NAME'S CHANCE
CAL--

TIME OUT,
FLYBOY. SURFER GIRL
NEEDS A SHOWER. I'LL
BE OUT IN A FEW
MINUTES.



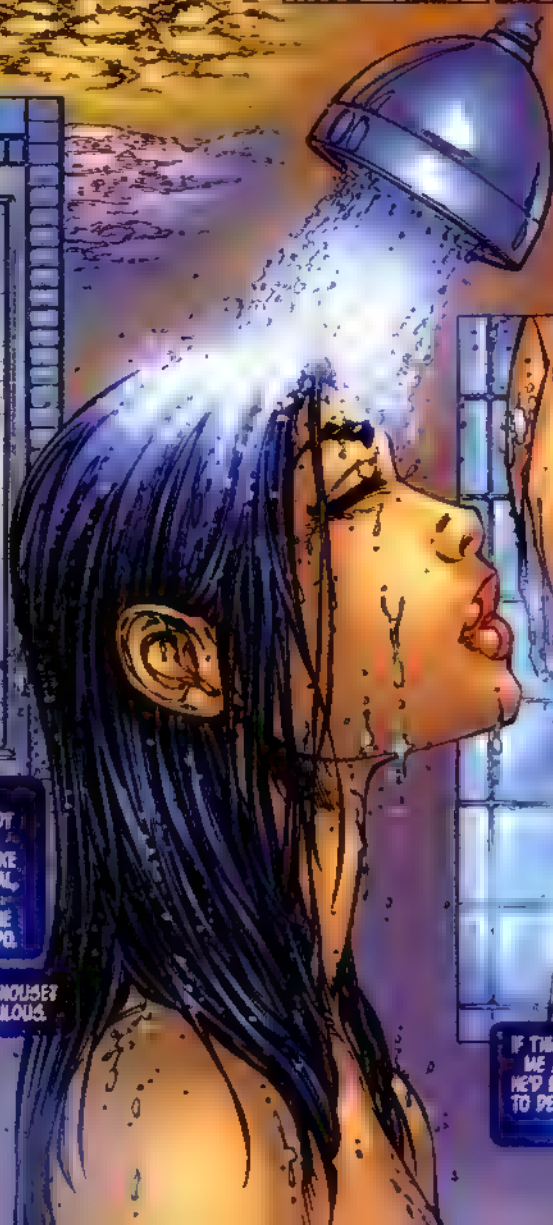
UH...



THE MILITARY AGARL
WHEN ARE THEY GOING
TO LAY OFF?

THEY ALREADY GRILLED
ME AT THE HOSPITAL, NOT
THAT I COULD TELL THEM
ANYTHING. TREATED ME LIKE
SOME KIND OF CRIMINAL,
WHEN THEY'RE THE ONES
WHO LAUNCHED THE
TORPEDO.

AND COMING TO MY HOUSE?
THAT IS RIDICULOUS.



IF THIS GUY GIVES
ME ANY ATTITUDE
HE'D BETTER BE READY
TO DEAL WITH SOME
WRATH.



ALL RIGHT,
JIN. GIMME A
READING.

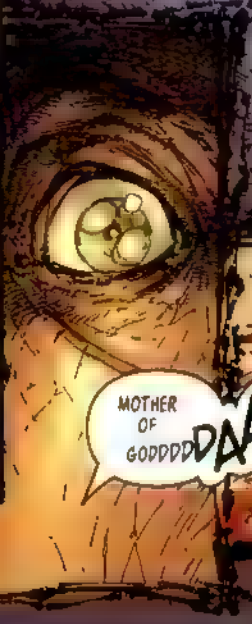
THE
PRESSURE'S
COMING BACK
TO NORMAL.

GOOD KEEP
YOUR EYES ON THE
DIAL AND GIMME TEN
SECOND TO GET THE
CLAMPS LOCKED
DOWN.

I'M ON
IT.

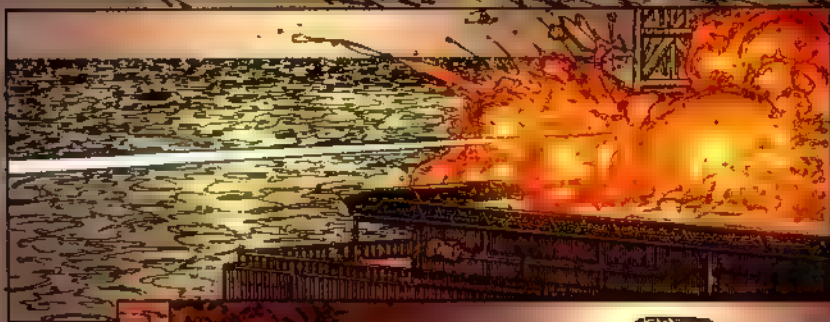
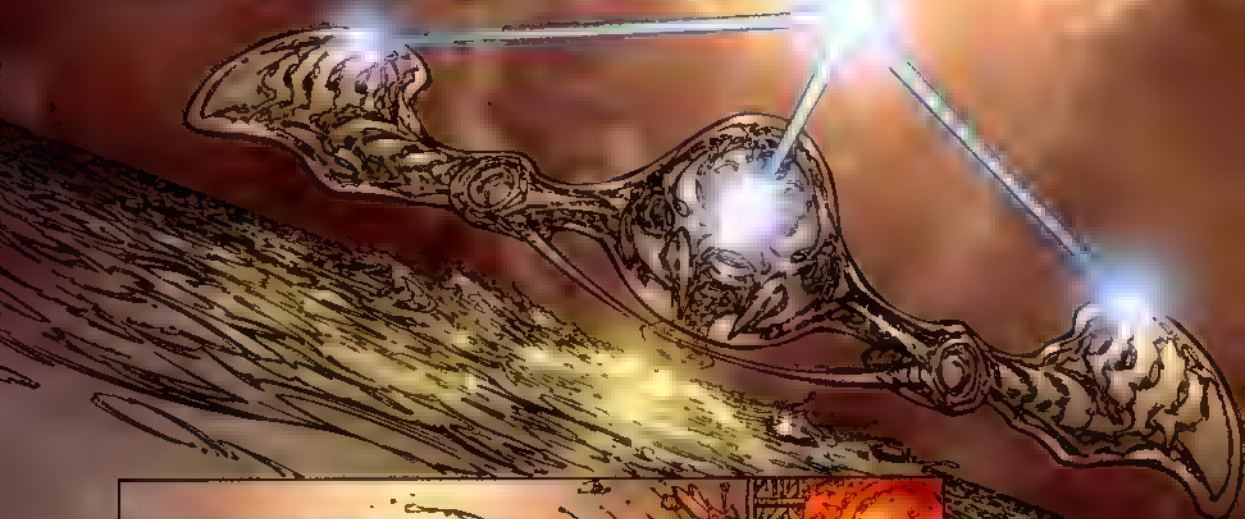
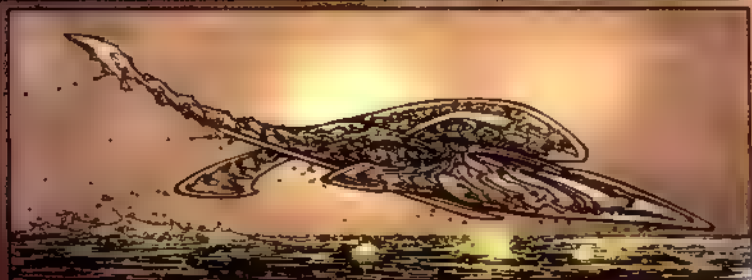


WE WANT
TO MAKE
SURE...



MOTHER
OF
GODDD

DAHHH!!





THIS IS PLATFORM
FRANKLIN-ALPHA-CHARLIE
CALLING SDS SOUTH
TWO!

WE'RE UNDER
ATTACK! REPEAT,
WE'RE UNDER--

FRANKLIN-
ALPHA-CHARLIE, WHAT
IS YOUR SECURITY
CLEARANCE?

GODDAMMIT,
I DON'T HAVE TIME...
YELLOWFIRE YELLOWFIRE,
PASSWORD
OCTANE!

ROGER
CHARLIE, GO
AHEAD.

THEY CAME OUT
OF NOWHERE! OUR EARLY
WARNING SYSTEM NEVER
SQUEAKED, BUT THEY'RE
AIRBORNE AND HAVE
PERSONNEL ON
DECK.

JESUS CHRIST,
THEY'RE DESTROYING
THE PLATFORM!

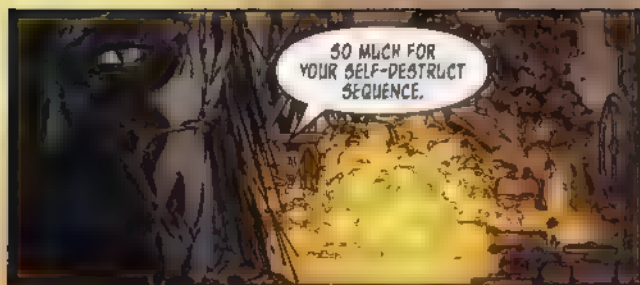
WHO IS IT,
CHARLIE?

I THINK IT'S
THE AMERICANS! THEY'RE
USING THE NEW TECHNOLOGY!
THEY MUST BE HERE
FOR THE FUEL!

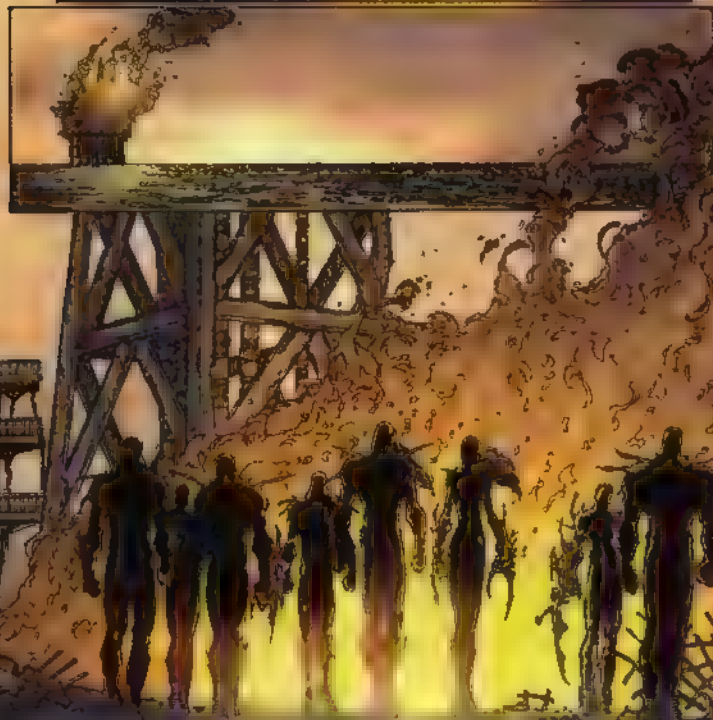
I'M STARTING
THE SELF-DESTRUCT
SEQUENCE!

GOOD
LORD!

SOUTH TWO!
SOUTH TWO!
IT'S NOT
THE--



SO MUCH FOR
YOUR SELF-DESTRUCT
SEQUENCE.



THIS IS THE
FOREMAN. HE MIGHT
MAKE A VALUABLE
HOSTAGE.

NO
HOSTAGES,
MAKO.

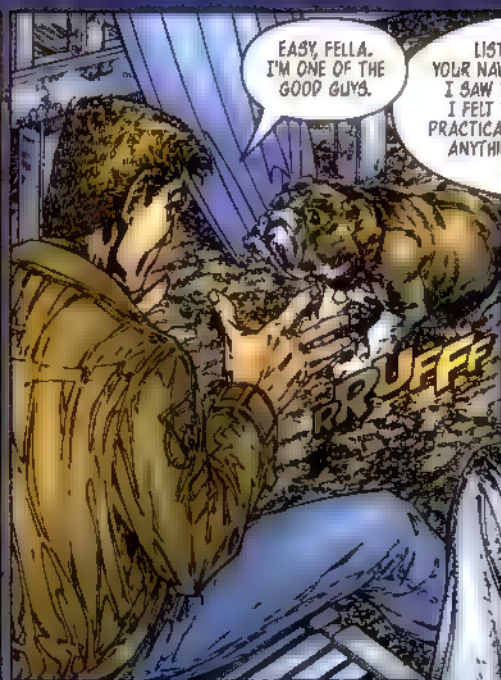


YOU CAN HAVE
A MOMENT TO MAKE
YOUR PEACE



ZYANNE, GO KEEP
KILLIAN UP TO DATE. TELL
HIM WE'RE BEGINNING
THE CONVERSION.





EASY, FELLA.
I'M ONE OF THE
GOOD GUYS.

LISTEN, I ALREADY TOLD
YOUR NAVY BUDDIES WHAT I KNOW.
I SAW THE TORPEDO COMING IN,
I FELT THE SHOCKWAVE, THEN I
PRACTICALLY DROWNED I DIDN'T SEE
ANYTHING ELSE, I DON'T KNOW
ANYTHING ELSE.



I'M NOT
SITTING THROUGH
ANOTHER FOUR-HOUR
DEBRIEFING JUST SO
YOU CAN HEAR ME
REPEAT MYSELF
SIXTEEN TIMES.

CRANK DOWN THE
AGGRO, SURFER GIRL. I'M
NOT HERE TO DEBRIEF
YOU. I'M HERE BECAUSE
I...UH...I SAW
YOU...UH...

I'M THE GUY
WHO PULLED YOU
OUT OF THE
WATER.

...

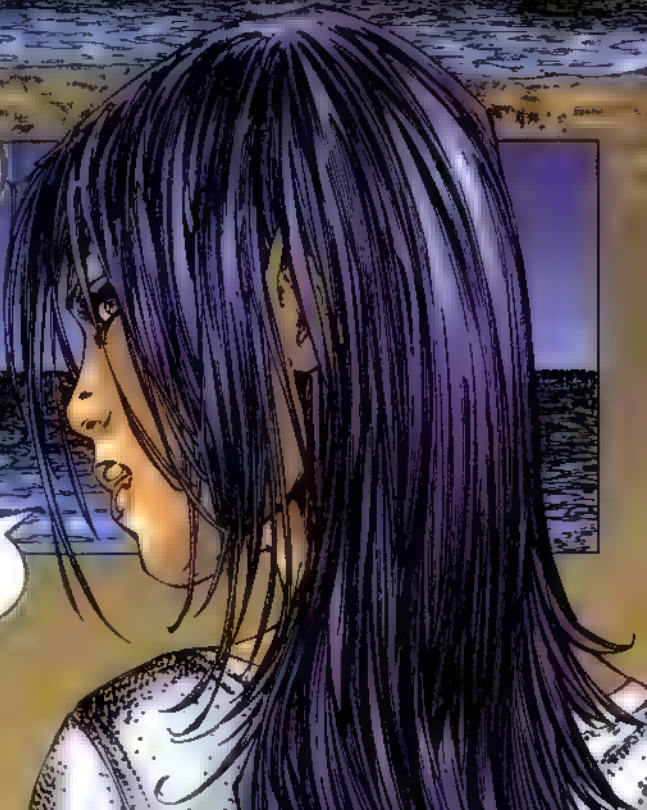
OH.



SEE, HERE'S THE
THING, THOUGH. WHEN I
FOUND YOU DOWN
THERE—

WAIT. STOP I'VE ANSWERED
ALL THE NAVY'S QUESTIONS, NOW I'VE
GOT ONE FOR YOU. I WANT TO KNOW
WHY ONE OF YOUR TRIGGER-HAPPY
BUDDIES FIRED THE TORPEDO.

IT WAS ME.
I FIRED THE
TORPEDO.





YOU?
WHY, FOR
GOD'S
SAKE?

YOU KNOW YOU
ALMOST KILLED ME? YOU
DID KILL, LIKE, EIGHTY
PEOPLE! WHAT THE #*%&
WERE YOU
THINKING?!

SHUT UP FOR A SECOND
AND LISTEN. I WASN'T JUST SHOOTING.
I WAS SHOOTING AT SOMETHING.
THE TORPEDO HIT IT, OR AT LEAST IT
SHOULD HAVE, BUT THE BOGEY...
DISSOLVED. MY TORPEDO WENT RIGHT
THROUGH IT AND HIT THAT
INSTALLATION.



I'M NOT HERE
TO APOLOGIZE.
I @#\$%ED UP, AND
I'LL COME TO GRIPS
WITH IT IN MY
OWN WAY.

I'M HERE BECAUSE
OF YOU. BECAUSE OF WHAT
I SAW. YOU, IN THE WATER,
GLOWING. YOU WERE LIKE
BUBBLES WITH A HUMAN FORM.
YOU HAD DISSOLVED JUST
LIKE THE GODDAMN
BOGEY.

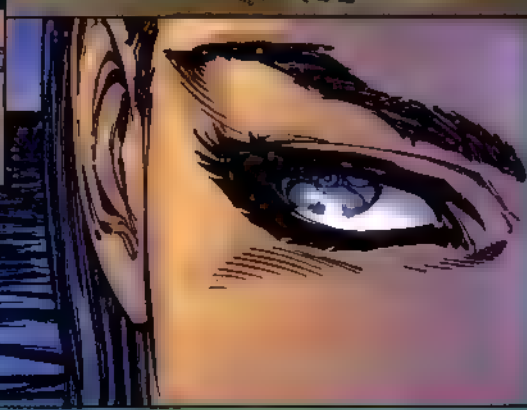


I KNOW WHAT
I SAW, AND I KNOW
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE. BUT I
CAN'T GET THE IMAGE
OF YOU OUT OF MY
HEAD. DID I SEE IT?
WAS IT REAL?

OR DO I
BELONG IN A
PADDED
CELL?

I DON'T KNOW.
UNTIL NOW, I WAS PRETTY
SURE I WAS
HALLUCINATING.

BUT
NOW I DON'T
KNOW. IF IT WAS
REAL, I CAN'T
EXPLAIN IT.



"I DON'T KNOW IF
ANYONE CAN EXPLAIN IT."

"...HAVE A
PROJECT
UNREVEAL

"THE SCALE SUGGESTS
SOMETHING MORE ELABORATE
THAN THEIR BERMUDA
TRIANGLE OPERATION.

"CONSULT WITH YOUR
CONTACTS AND DETERMINE
THEIR INTENTIONS. IT'S
URGENT. WE'RE COUNTING
ON YOU."

THAT'S
THE COMPLETE
MESSAGE,
SIR.

TAKE THIS BACK!
I'VE LOCATED THE GIRL,
THOUGH I'VE HAD NO
LUCK FINDING THE
OTHER ONE.

I WILL LOOK INTO
THEIR OPERATION.
AFTER I'VE TALKED TO
HER. SHE IS MY FIRST
PRIORITY.

GOT
THAT?

YES,
SIR.

GOOD.
GO.

ASPEN'S BEEN AWAY FROM
US FOR FIFTEEN YEARS. SHE
WAS ONLY A CHILD THEN, WITH
RAW TALENT AND NO SKILL.

IT'S REASONABLE
TO ASSUME SHE WON'T
HAVE DEVELOPED ANY
SKILL IN THE YEARS
SINCE.



IT'S ALSO REASONABLE
TO ASSUME ONE CAN LEARN.
BUT IS IT REASONABLE TO EXPECT
HER TO LEARN A LIFETIME'S WORTH
OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE SHORT
TIME WE HAVE?

NO, IT'S
UNREASONABLE.

BUT IT SIMPLY
MUST HAPPEN...

...FOR SHE IS
OUR ONLY OPTION.

To Be
CONTINUED

POP LOW

MICHAEL TURNER'S

FATWOM

Image

4 \$2.50
MAR 2000
CAN



MICHAEL
TURNER
JOE
WEEMS
JDSMITH
1999

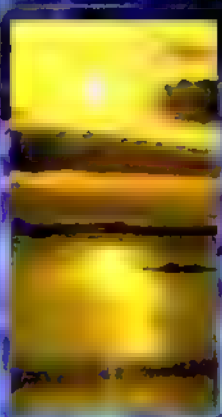
DIRECT SALES



00411>

0985507401 4

FATHOM *an Image Comics production*



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS

MICHAEL TURNER

BILL O'NEIL

MICHAEL TURNER

JOE WEEMS V

JASON GORDER

JONATHAN D. SMITH

DENNIS HEISLER

DAVID WOHL

RENAE GEERLINGS

MARCO GALLI

ALP ALTINER

PETER STEIGERWALD

NICK CHUN, RAUL ARROYO

CAESAR RODRIGUEZ, DAYNA KELLY

BRIAN GREEN, ROBIN SPEAR

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JOE WEEMS V

JONATHAN D. SMITH

MARC SILVESTRI

MICHAEL TURNER

JOE WEEMS V

JONATHAN D. SMITH

TOP COW



FOR
Image
COMICS

THE
MURDER

MARC SILVESTRI : executive officer

BRAD FORKHOFF : president

DAVID WOHL : senior president of creative affairs

SOMBA IM : production director/editer

KATE BARRWOOD : director of sales and marketing

TIM MURPHY : director of development

AARON MICHEL : director of business affairs

BRIAN SELZER : director of Top Cow

NICHOLAS CHUN : pre-production producer

RENAE GEERLINGS : has a head cold from sleep

ALVIN COATS : special projects coordinator

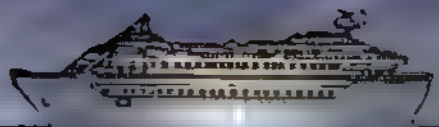
address correspondence to: 1223 Wilshire Blvd. #496 Santa Monica, Ca. 90401 E-Mail: fathom@topcow.com or visit us on the web at www.topcow.com

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PRINTED IN CANADA

THE CHINESE SUB-ROBOTS
SERVED A PURPOSE NOT QUITE
INTENDED BY ITS DESIGNERS.

IT CHANGES
HUMAN HISTORY.



IT'S THAT
BUTTON YOU
WANT TO PRESS.
THAT ONE
RIGHT
THERE.

GET AWAY
I KNOW WHAT
I'M DOING.

WE NEED
THEM ALIVE SO
YOUR WEAPONS
STAY AT
STAGE ONE.

YES
SIR.

WHAT
THE HELL ARE
YOU DOING?
GET BACK UNDER-
WATER, YOU
IDIOTS!

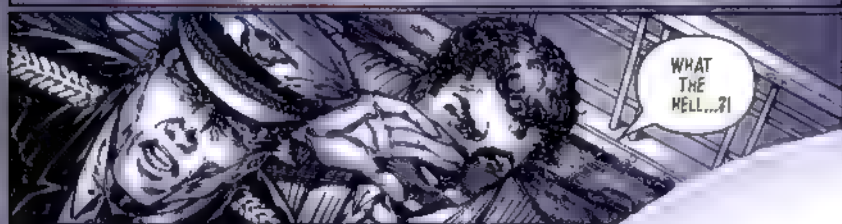
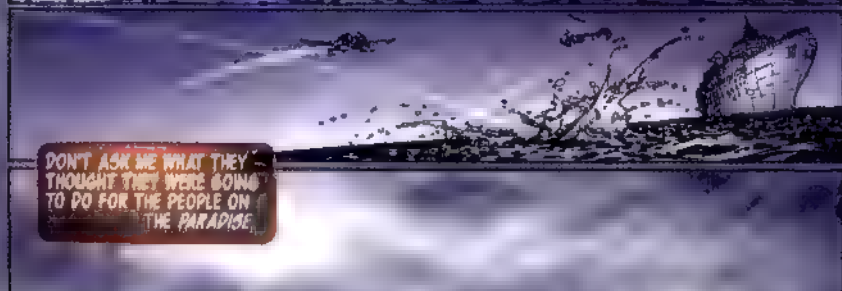
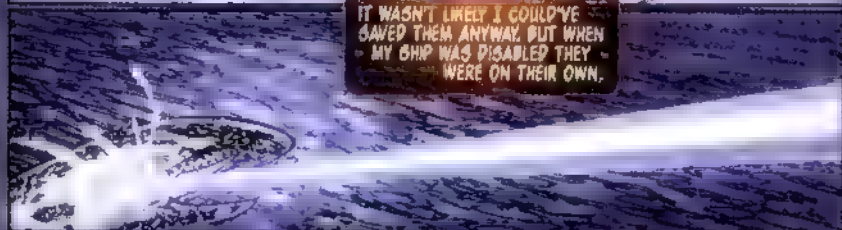
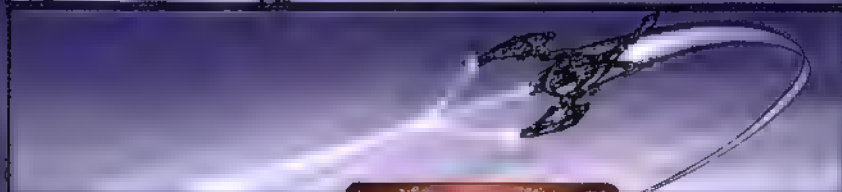
THIS ISN'T
MAKE BELIEVE!
THEY'VE ARMED
THE SHY-
BIRDS.

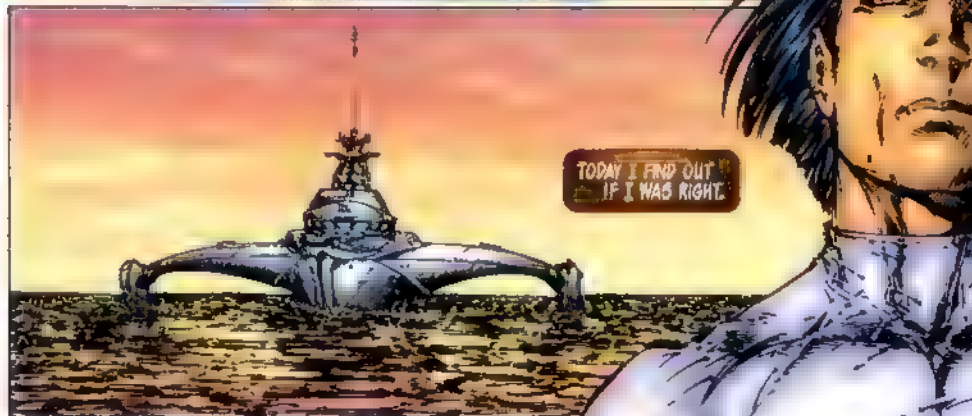
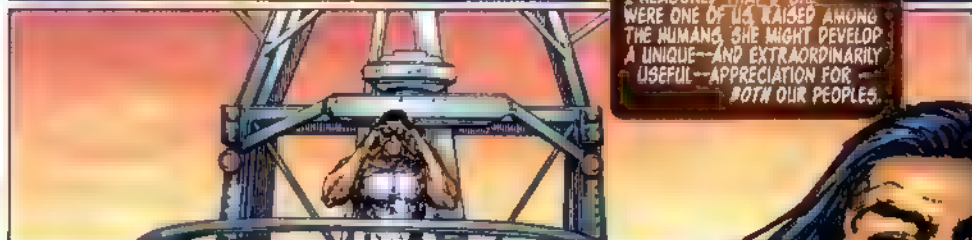
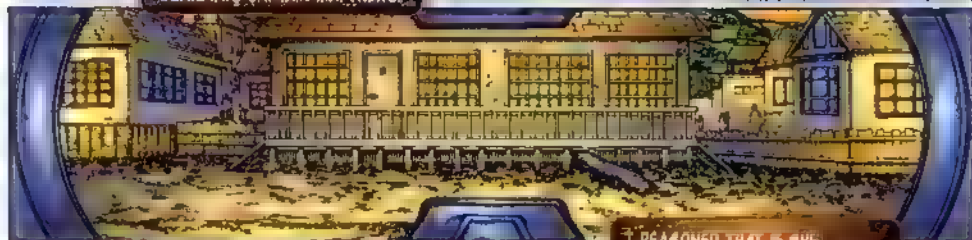
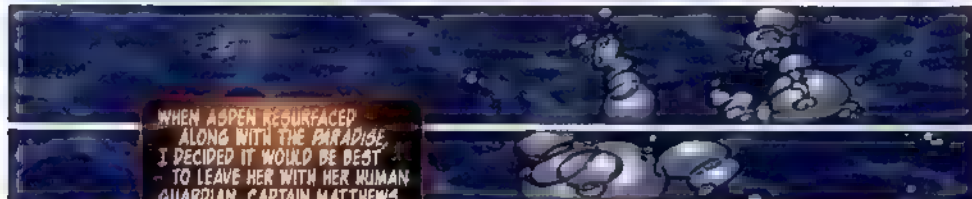
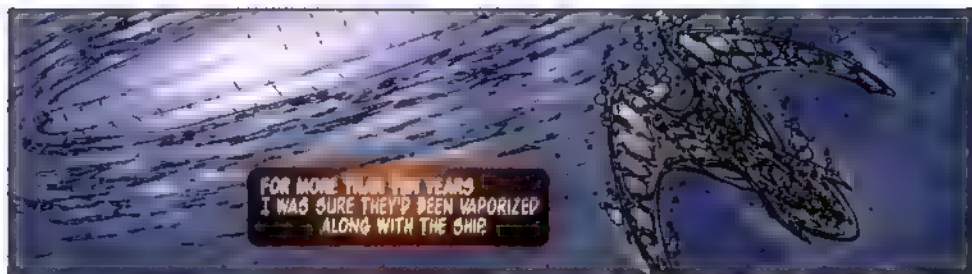
WE
CAN'T BE
UP HERE WHEN
THEY GO
OFF--

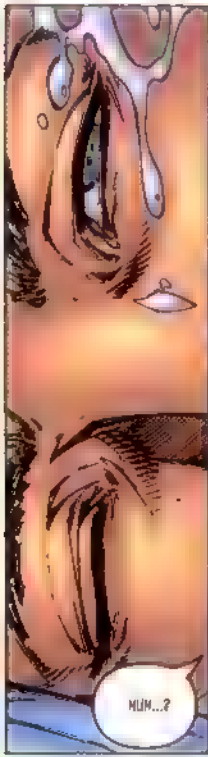
--GO
GET BACK
IN THE
WATER!

I'M TELLIN'
YOU, PRESS
THAT ONE!

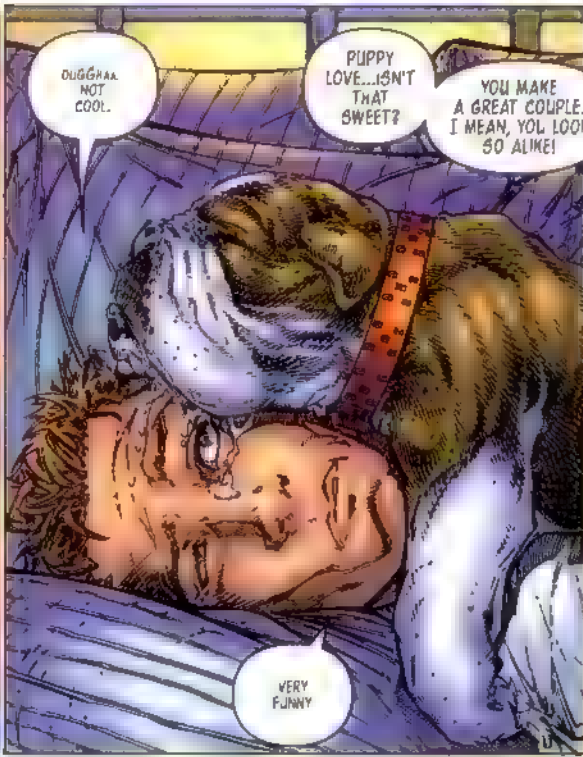
SHUT UP
ALREADY!







MUM...?



OUGGHA
NOT
COOL.

PUPPY
LOVE...ISN'T
THAT
SWEET?

YOU MAKE
A GREAT COUPLE.
I MEAN, YOU LOOK
SO ALIKE!

VERY
FUNNY



SHAKE IT OFF,
FLYBOY--OR SHOULD THAT
BE WIPE IT OFF? YOU NEED
TO MAKE COFFEE WHILE
I GO BUY BAGELS.

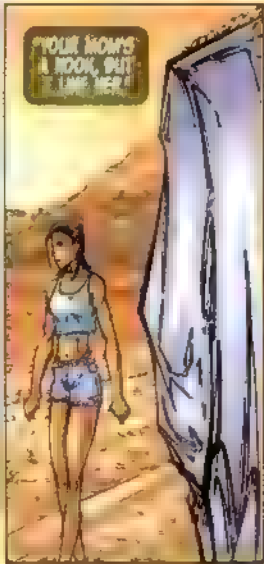
YAWN
I CAN HANDLE
COFFEE. YOU'LL
BE BACK
IN...?

TWENTY MINUTES
OR SO. EVERYTHING'S IN
THE CABINET NEXT TO
THE FRIDGE.

AND UM, THANKS
FOR GETTING BETWEEN
MATILDA'S PROOL AND
MY COUCH.
HEH HEHE...



WHATAYA
SAY, POOCH?
WANT SOME
BREAKFAST?



"YOUR MOM'S
A HOOL, BUT
I LOVE HER!"



"YOU'RE PROBABLY USED
TO GUYS LIKING HER, HUNT"

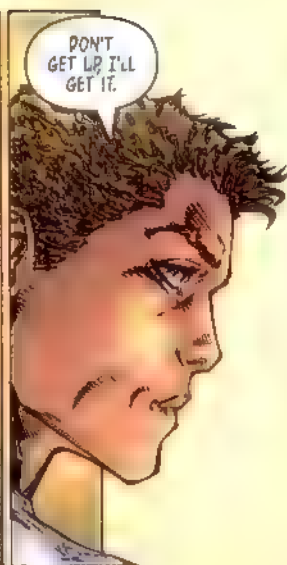


"I'LL BET
SHE GETS
A TON OF
ATTENTION."

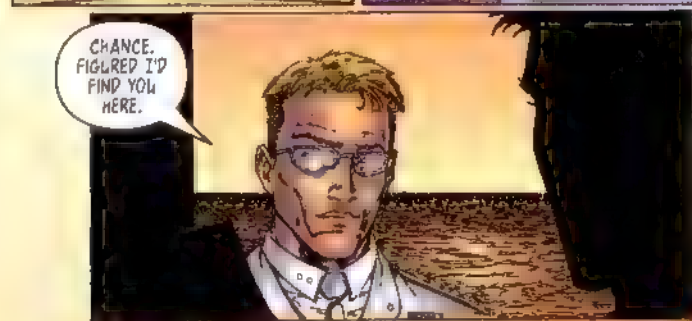


HEY, POOCH, WHO'S THIS IN THE PICTURES?

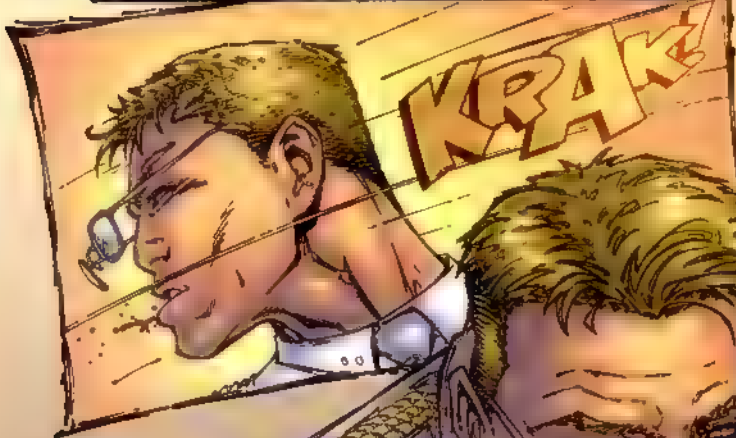
PROB'LY THE ROOMMATE. HUM HUM, NICE PICTURE... GIGGLING MARLIN... THAT'S FUNNY.



DON'T GET UP, I'LL GET IT.



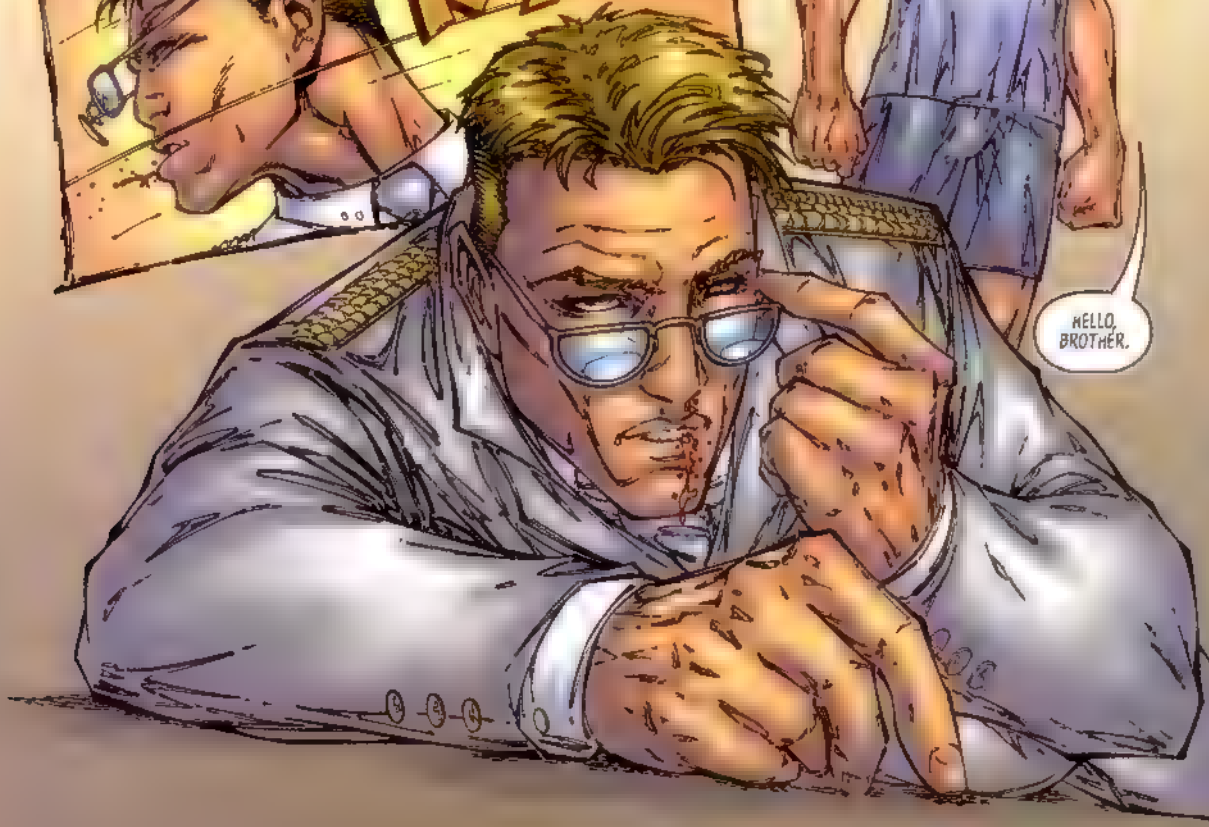
CHANCE. FIGURED I'D FIND YOU HERE.



KRAK!



HELLO, BROTHER.



The

THE PACIFIC OCEAN,
NEAR MIDWAY.

ALL HANDS,
THIS IS THE
CAPTAIN.

Y'ALL DID
GREAT--YOU PROVED
I GOT THE BEST DAMN
CREW IN THE FLEET.
SO THE GOOD NEWS IS,
I'M GIVING YOU ALL AN
EXTRA WEEK'S LIBERTY
SOON AS WE
PULL IN.

ALL RIGHT,
ALL RIGHT, QUIET
DOWN. THERE'S BAD
NEWS TOO. WE'RE GOING
TO BE ON THE SURFACE
AND EXPOSED TILL WE
CAN GET THOSE BOW PLANES
REPAIRED SO THE
U.S.S. SEA WOLF IS ON
FULL BATTLE ALERT UNTIL
THAT TIME.

Y'ALL
GONNA EARN
THAT EXTRA
WEEK.
THAT IS
ALL.

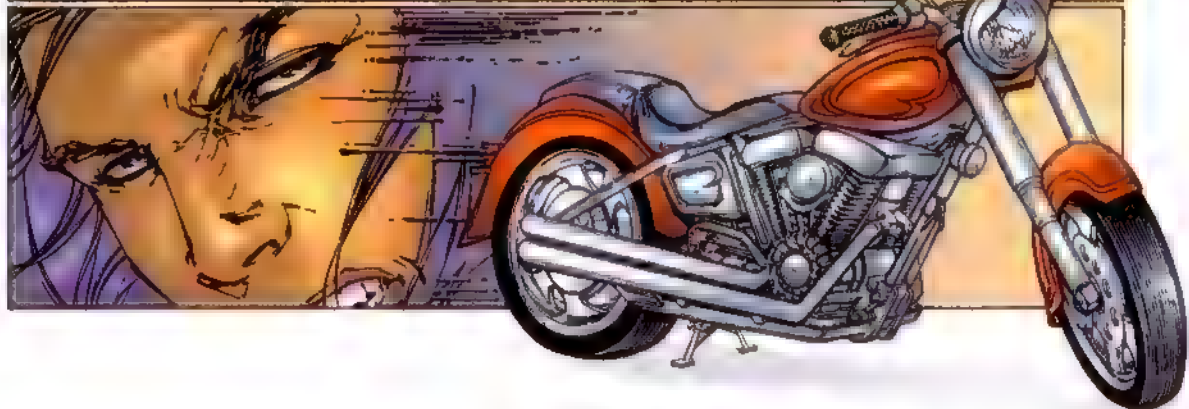
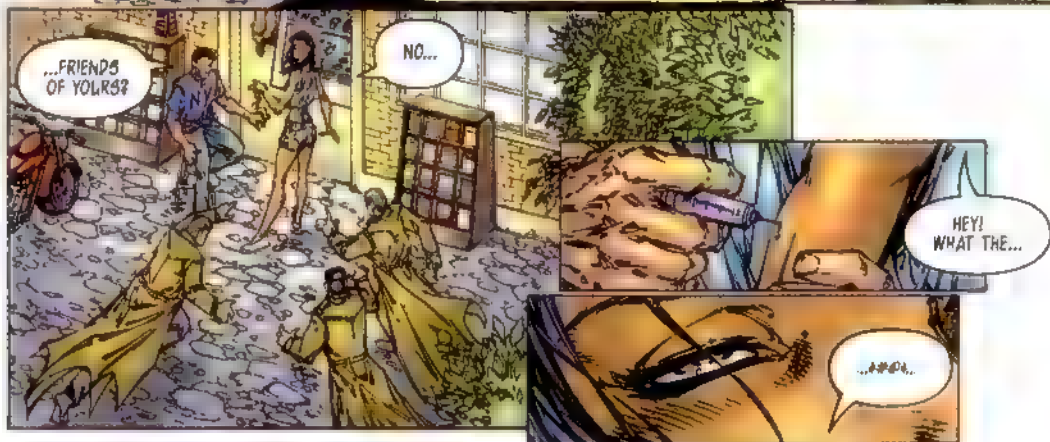
CAPTAIN, I'VE
GOT TWO SURFACE
RADAR CONTACTS
BEARING TWO-SEVEN-TWO.
LOOK LIKE SHORT RANGE
FIGHTERS.

I'VE GOT VISUAL,
CAPTAIN. THEY'RE JAPANESE
TACHI-CLASS FIGHTERS. THEY'VE
OVERFLOWN OUR BOW AND
THEIR HARD POINTS ARE
HEAVY.

I'D SAY
THEIR INTENT
IS HOSTILE,
SIR.

CASTLE,
THIS IS CAPTAIN
RUSH, U.S.S. SEA WOLF.
WE'VE GOT A POTENTIAL
SITUATION HERE AND
REQUEST AIR
SUPPORT.

ACCOMMODATED
SEA WOLF, FOUR HARRIES
INBOUND, ETA TWELVE
MINUTES.



THEY'RE
TRENCHING AND
PROVING BLACK VEHICLES.
THEY MUST THEREFORE
BE GOVERNMENT MEN.

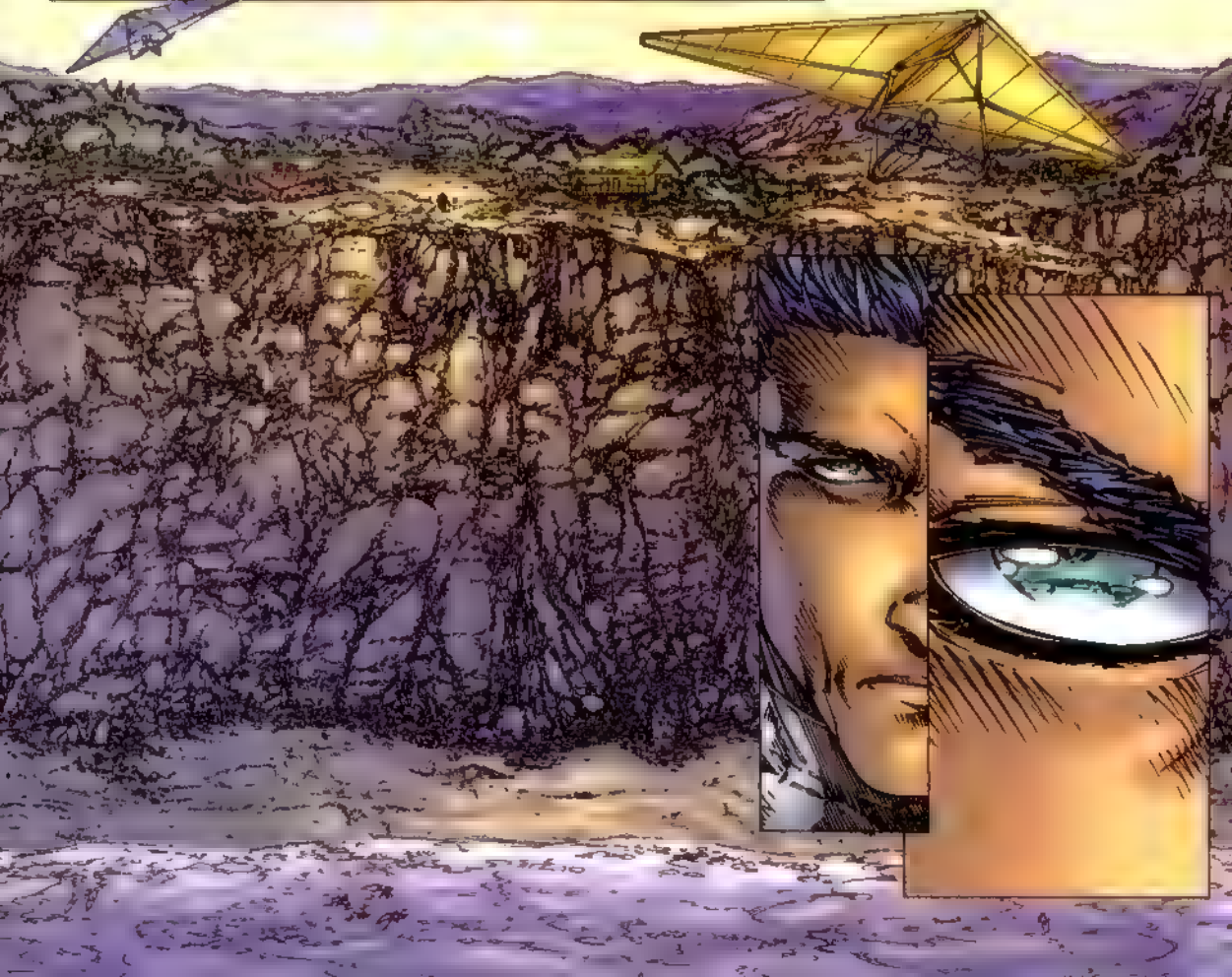
THAT THE GOVERNMENT
HAS AN INTEREST IN AOPEN
MEANS THEY KNOW WHO
SHE IS--OR RATHER, THEY
KNOW WHAT SHE'S
CAPABLE OF.

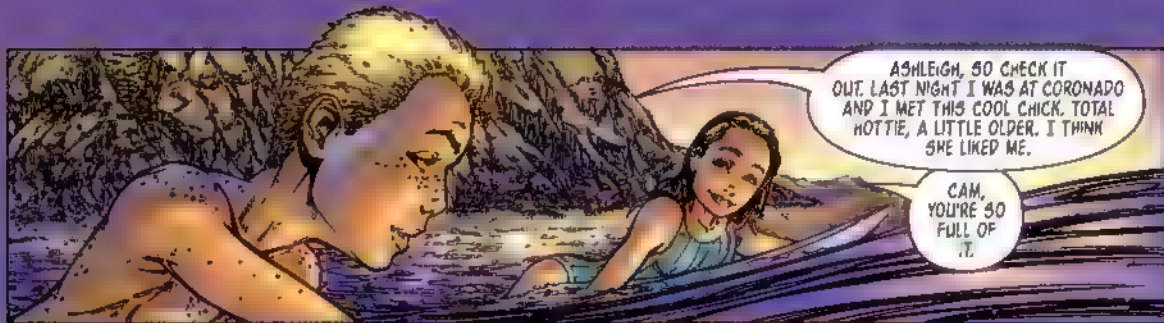
SCKRACK! THINK
IF THEY ~~KNOW~~ THEY
WOULDN'T BE HANDING
HER OVER.

DO ~~WHY~~ ARE
THEY HANDING
HER OVER?

MY BUT MOTHER TELLS ME
THAT GOOPS HAVE JUST BEEN
EXCHANGED FOR SERVICES.
WHATEVER THE SERVICES ARE
CAN WAIT, RIGHT NOW.

LET'S BETTER SEE IF
I CAN'T RECOVER
THOSE GOOPS.





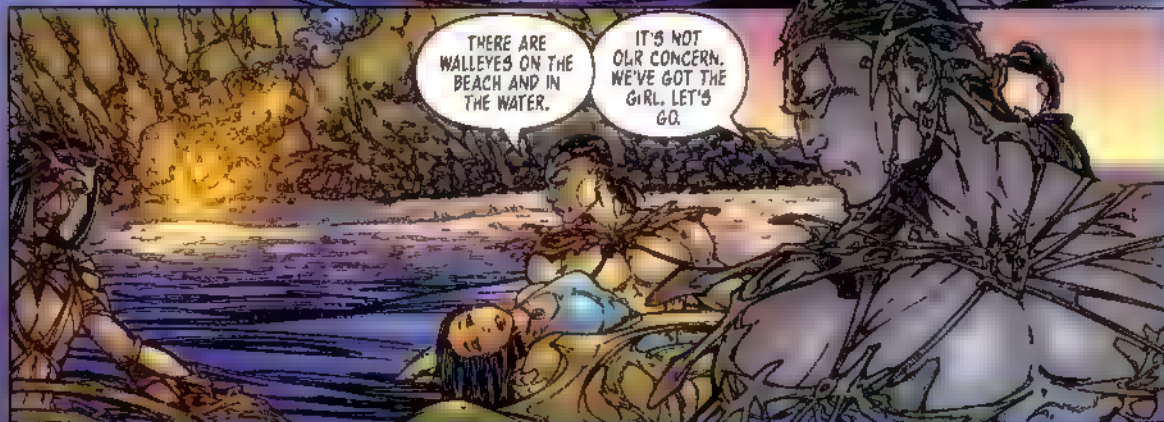
ASHLEIGH, SO CHECK IT OUT. LAST NIGHT I WAS AT CORONADO AND I MET THIS COOL CHICK. TOTAL HOTTIE, A LITTLE OLDER. I THINK SHE LIKED ME.

CAM, YOU'RE SO FULL OF IT.



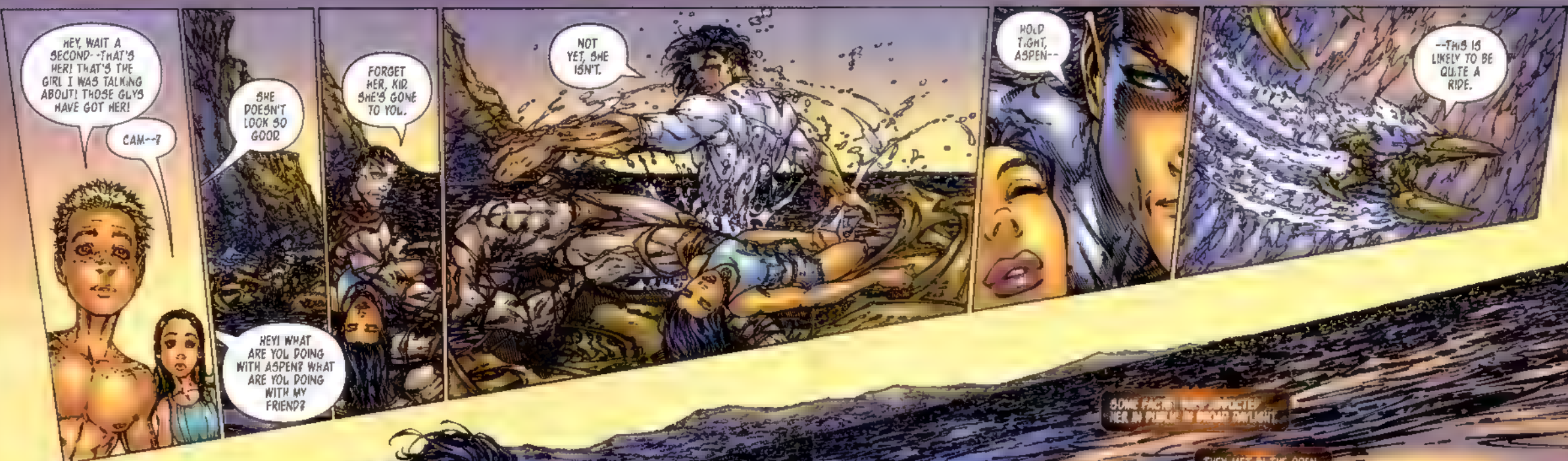
NO, I'M SERIOUS, ASH. WHEN I FIRST PADDLED OVER TO HER, SHE WAS ALL INTENSE, LIKE SHE WASN'T HAVING A VERY GOOD DAY. BUT YOU KNOW ME, I'M SMOOTH. SO AFTER A COUPLE OF MINUTES I WAS LIKE, "WHO'S YER DADDY?"

AS F. CAM, YOU'RE SUCH A LIAR.



THERE ARE WALLEYES ON THE BEACH AND IN THE WATER.

IT'S NOT OUR CONCERN. WE'VE GOT THE GIRL. LET'S GO.



HEY, WAIT A SECOND--THAT'S HER! THAT'S THE GIRL I WAS TALKING ABOUT! THOSE GUYS HAVE GOT HER!

CAM--7

SHE DOESN'T LOOK SO GOOD

FORGET HER, KID SHE'S GONE TO YOU.

NOT YET, SHE ISN'T.

HOLD TIGHT, ASPEN--

--THIS IS LIKELY TO BE QUITE A RIDE.

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH ASPEN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH MY FRIEND?

SOME FACTS: WEY WADGETS HER IN PUBLIC IN BROAD DAYLIGHT.

THEY MET IN THE OPEN, ON A POPULAR BEACH.

THEY HAD AN CONVERSATION WITH A HUMAN.

CONCLUSION: THEY'RE COMING INTO THE OPEN. SECRECY ISN'T THE END--ALL DE-ALL THAT IT ONCE WAS.

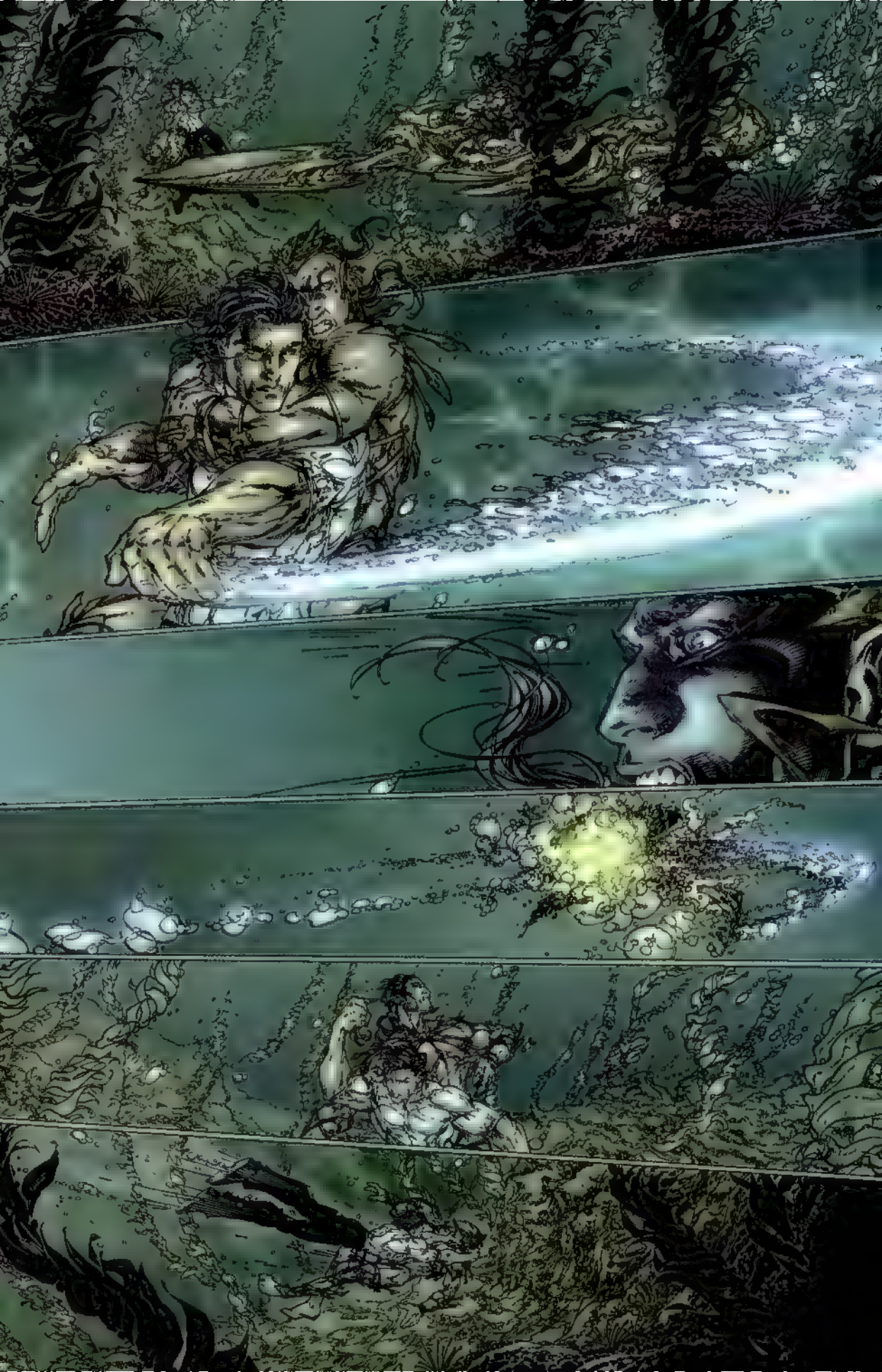
THIS MEANS WHEN THEY'RE READY TO LIVE ALONGSIDE THE HUMANS.



NICE
TRY.

BUT I
PRACTICALLY
INVENTED THIS
SORT OF
THING.







THEY'VE GOT ASPEN,
UNTRAINED, UNKNOWN,
ASPEN, WHO'S RAW LIKE
A LUMP OF UNFORMED CLAY.
IF THEY CAN MOLD HER IN
THEIR IMAGE, SHE'LL BE
A POWERFUL WEAPON AT
THEIR DISPOSAL.

I'VE GOT A SOLDIER
WITH A MIND AND MEMORY
FULL OF DETAILS. HE'LL BEND
OR HE'LL BREAK, BUT EITHER
WAY I'LL USE HIM TO FIND HER.

AND I HAVE
TO FIND HER...

...BEFORE THEY
DO SOMETHING
IRREVERSIBLE.

GL
IN THE
MIDNIGHT

CASTLE,
WE'VE GOT TWO
LOCAL RADAR CONTACTS
BEARING ONE-SEVEN-ZERO.
INTERCEPT IN ONE
MINUTE THIRTY.

ROGER, REBEL.
YOU ARE AUTHORIZED
ONLY TO ESCORT THE
SEA WOLE AND
AGGRESSIVE
MANEUVERS.

ROGER THAT,
CASTLE.
NO AGGRESSIVE
MANEUVERS.

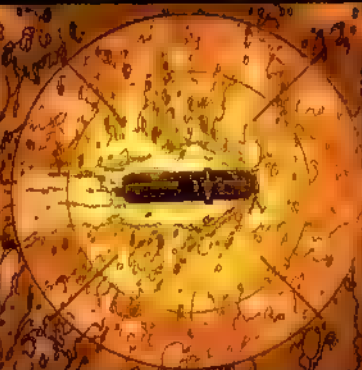
SEA WOLE THIS.
TO CASTLE. WE'RE TRANSLATING
A WARNING FROM THE JAPANESE
PILOT HE SAYS YOU'RE IN RESTRICTED
JAPANESE WATERS AND ARE TO
REVERSE COURSE
IMMEDIATELY.

JAPANESE WATERS...
WE'RE OFF MIDWAY FOR
GOD'S SAKE! WHAT IS
HE TALKING ABOUT?

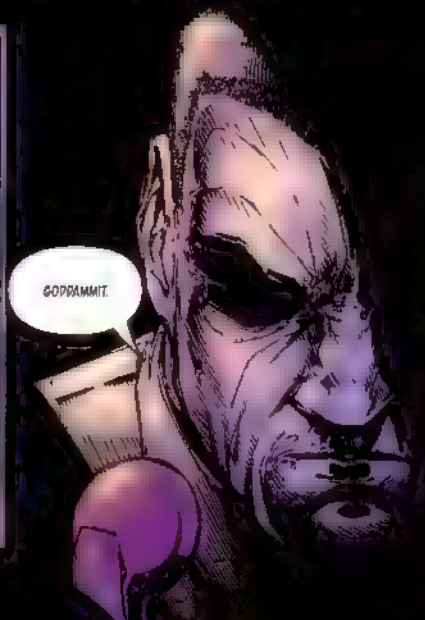
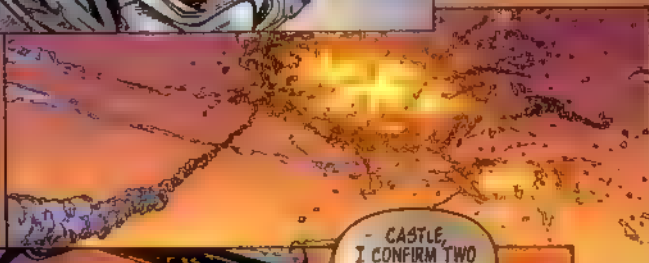
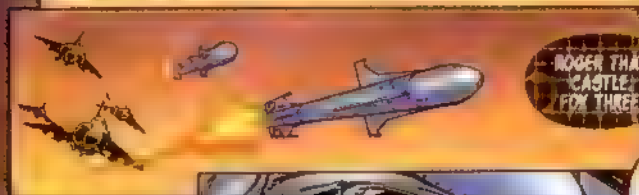
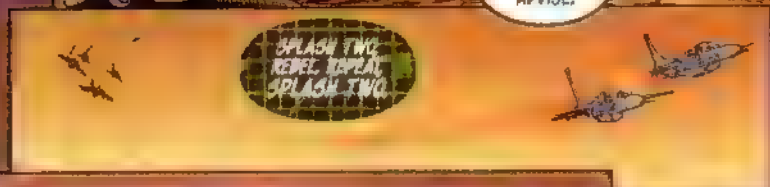
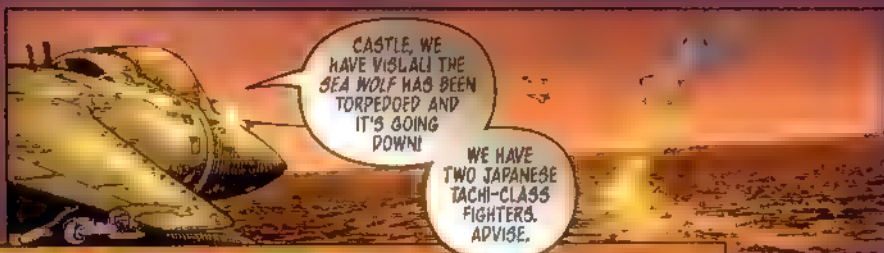
WE DON'T KNOW,
SEA WOLE BUT WE'RE
REQUESTING SOME BREATHING
ROOM FOR YOU WHILE WE
WORK IT OUT.

YOUR FOUR
HARRIERS ARE ABOUT
45 SECONDS AWAY.
DON'T MAKE A MOVE
TIL THEY GET
THERE.

ROGER,
CASTLE.







BACK IN
SAN DIEGO...

CHANCE, LISTEN
TO REASON. IS THIS
GIRL—THIS MYSTERY
WOMAN—IS SHE WORTH
THROWING AWAY YOUR
CAREER?

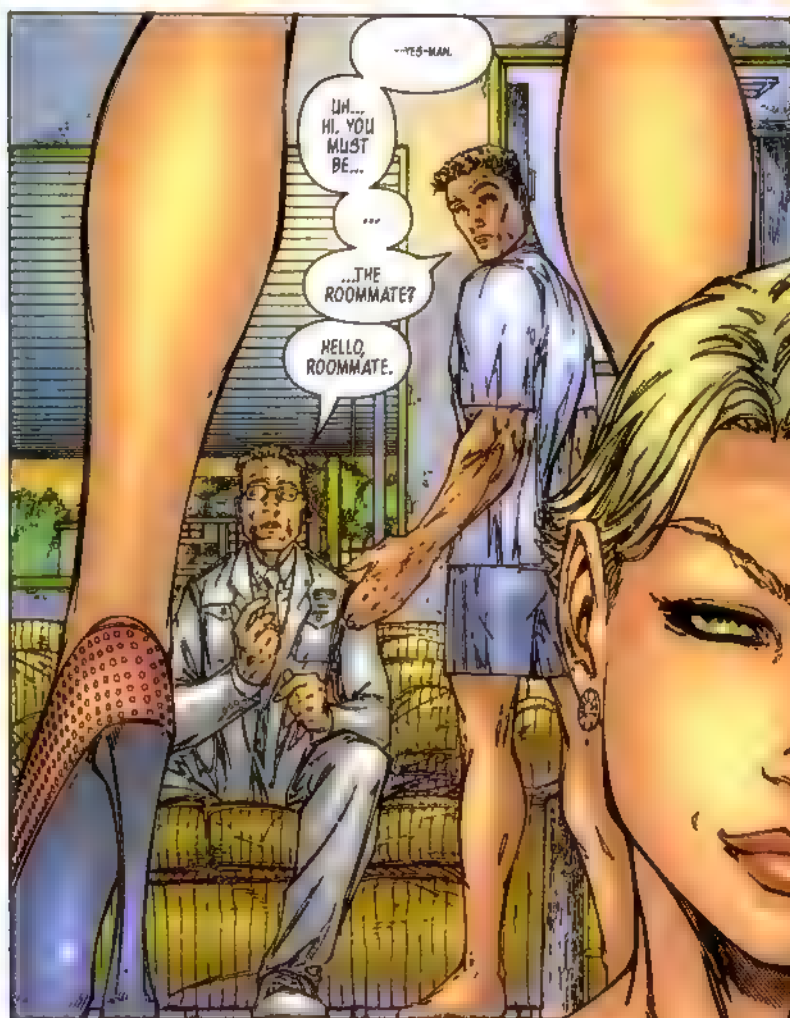
CAREER?
YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO CARES SO
DAMN MUCH ABOUT
HIS CAREER.

WHAT'S THAT
SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
WHY SHOULDN'T I
CARE ABOUT--

CHRIS, YOU'RE
AN ASS-KISSING TOAD.
"YES, SIR. NO, SIR.
RIGHT AWAY, SIR." WHAT
IS THAT? IT'S BULLSHIT,
IS WHAT IT IS.

HEY, ##@# YOU,
CHANCE. YOU'VE GOT THIS
GREAT GIFT--YOU GET TO
FLY--AND YOU'RE READY TO
PISS IT AWAY OVER
SOME--

BACK TO THAT.
AGAIN. YOU'RE STILL JEALOUS
THAT I FLY AND YOU DON'T. GET
OVER IT, CHRIS. BEING GROUNDED
IS NO EXCUSE FOR BEING
A--



--YES--MAN.

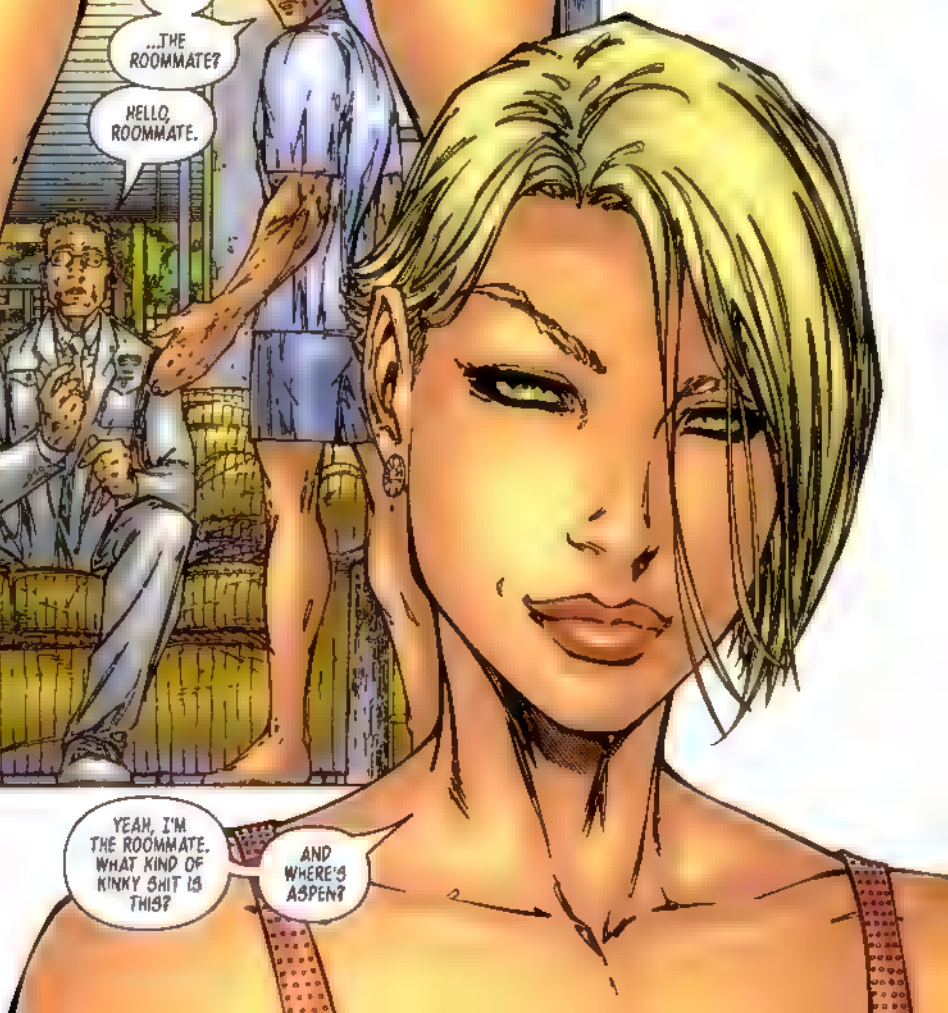
UH...
HI. YOU
MUST
BE...

...
...THE
ROOMMATE?

HELLO,
ROOMMATE.

YEAH, I'M
THE ROOMMATE.
WHAT KIND OF
KINKY SHIT IS
THIS?

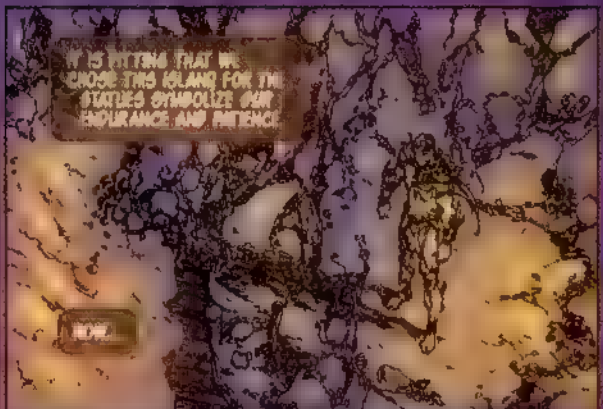
AND
WHERE'S
ASPEN?





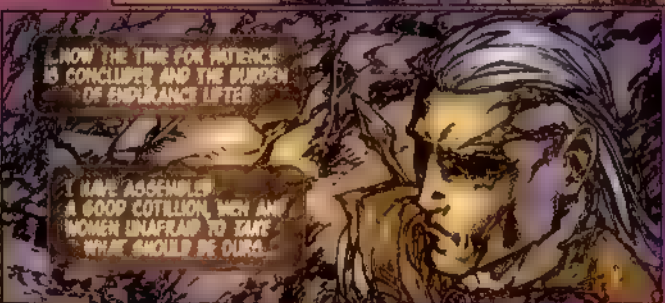
EASTER ISLAND

SO MANY CENTURES
THEY HAVE ENDURED WEATHERED
THE WORST THE PACIFIC STORMS
COULD THROW AT THEM



IT IS FITTING THAT WE
CHOOSE THIS ISLAND FOR THE
STATUES SYMBOLIZE OUR
ENDURANCE AND PATIENCE

NOW



NOW THE TIME FOR PATIENCE
IS CONCLUDED AND THE BURDEN
OF ENDURANCE LIFTED

I HAVE ASSEMBLED
A GOOD COTILLION, MEN AND
WOMEN UNAFRAID TO TAKE
WHAT SHOULD BE OURS



UNAFRAID TO SHED BLOOD
FOR WHAT IS RIGHT

UNAFRAID TO DIE FOR
WHAT I DREAM

WITH THESE MEN AND WOMEN
AT MY SIDE, I WILL SEE MY
DREAMS ACCOMPLISHED!



OUR
TIME HAS
COME!

TO BE
CONTINUED



TOP-GUN



5 MAY \$2.50 US \$3.00 CAN

TURNER
WELLS
SMITH

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATLUM

DIRECT SALES
00511
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MICHAEL
TURNER
JOE
WELLS
JOE
SMITH

FATHOM *and the Top Cow*



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS. One is the world we know.

THE OTHER IS THE WORLD WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

THE ONE WE KNOW.

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THE ONE WE KNOW.

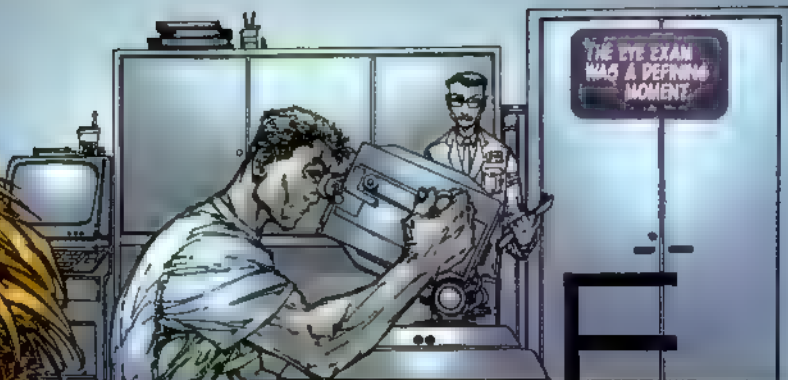
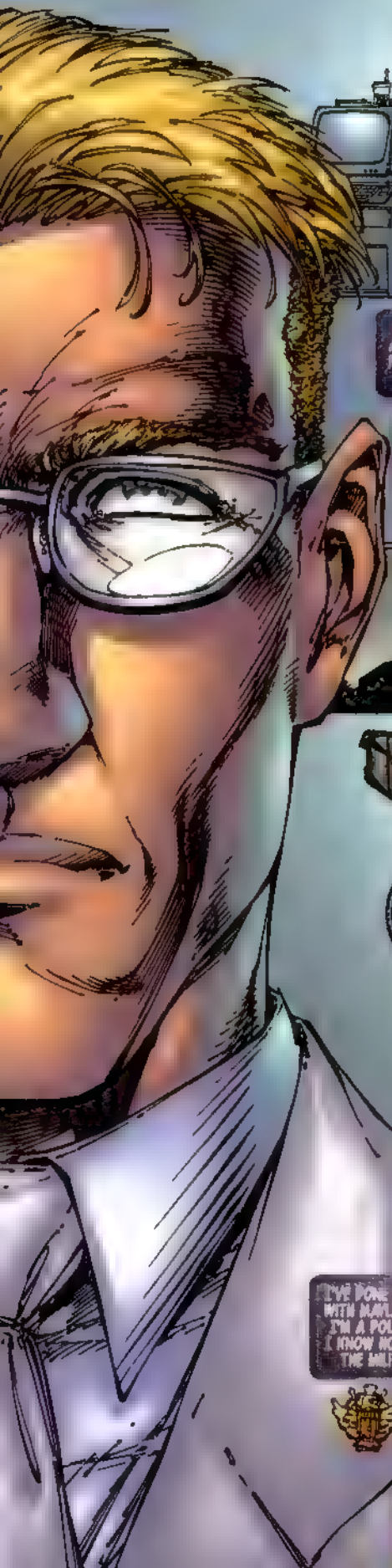
TOP COW



MARC SILVESTRI : chief executive officer
IRAD FOXHOVER : president
DAVID WOHL : vice president of creative affairs
SONIA EM : production director/producer
RENAE GEERLINGS : finally got her gig
KATE SHERWOOD : director of sales and marketing
TIM HERNANDEZ : director of development
AARON MICHEL : director of business affairs
BRIAN SELZER : director of Top Cow Information
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I FAILED IT, AND THAT WAS IT FOR MY DREAM OF BEING A PILOT.

TWENTY YEARS OF DREAMS PLOOYED IN A LINE OF BLURRY CAPITAL LETTERS.

REJECTED
OFFICIALS EXAMINED TULIP JAKE THE FLAKE
OFFICIALS EXAMINED TULIP JAKE THE FLAKE

WITH FLYING OUT, I WENT AFTER A CAREER IN COVERT INTELLIGENCE.



I WAS GOOD AT IT. IN WASHINGTON, MY WORK WITH NAVAL INTELLIGENCE EARNED ME A DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL.

CONGRATULATIONS, LIEUTENANT.

AND IT GOT THE ATTENTION OF ADMIRAL JAMES MARLANDER, THE GUY IN NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

WELCOME ABOARD, COMMANDER.



I'VE DONE WELL WITH MARLANDER, BECAUSE I'M A POLITICAL PERM AND I KNOW HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE MILITARY SYSTEM.

DO AS YOU'RE TOLD, DO IT WELL, AND INJECT AS LITTLE OF YOUR PERSONALITY INTO YOUR WORK AS POSSIBLE.

STILL, I'D RATHER HAVE BEEN A PILOT.



...LIKE MY
YOUNGER BROTHER,
CHANCE.

I ONCE HAD A LOOK
AT CHANCE'S SERVICE RECORD.
AS A PILOT HE WAS GIVEN
EXEMPLARY MARKS...

BUT AS AN OFFICER
HE WAS TOEING THE LINE WITH
INCIDENTS OF INSUBORDINATION.
I TRIED TO TALK TO HIM
ABOUT IT.

YOU'RE
LOOKING AT
MY FILE? WHAT
GIVES YOU THE
RIGHT?

YOU'D BETTER
COOL IT WITH THE
INSUBORDINATION,
CHANCE. IT'S
REFLECTING BADLY
ON ME, AND I CAN'T
HAVE THAT.

MAYLANDER
SAYS...

WHY DO
YOU CARE WHAT
MAYLANDER
SAYS?

YOU DON'T
NEED HIS MEDALS
TO BE A MAN!

SON OF
A BITCH!

THINGS HAVEN'T IMPROVED
MUCH SINCE THEN.

CHANCE,
YOU'RE U.S. AND
THE ADMIRAL WANTS
YOU BACK IN
HAWAII.

ARE YOU
COMING OR
NOT?

NOT.

AND I'VE
HEARD ENOUGH.
I'M OUTTA
HERE.

SOMETIMES I WISH
I WAS ALL THREE.

BUT I'M NOT.

GET ME
ADMIRAL
MAYLANDER,
PLEASE.

CHANCE IS MANY
THINGS THAT I AM
NOT. HE'S A LITTLE
WILD. HE'S HIS OWN
MAN, AND OF COURSE
HE'S A GOOD PILOT.

The Commissioner's office was unwilling to release the documents to us, leading this reporter to speculate...

NO, NO, NO, LESSEE...

The Commissioner's unwillingness to release the documents indicates that policy and practice are NOT one and the same.

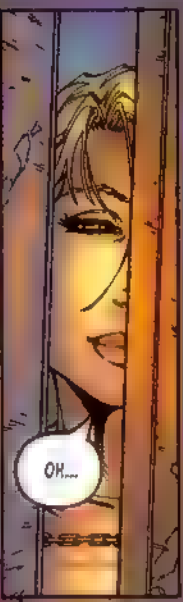
For Channel Three News, this is Tyler Kincaid.



NOK NOK



YEAH...?



OH...

UHM, HI...

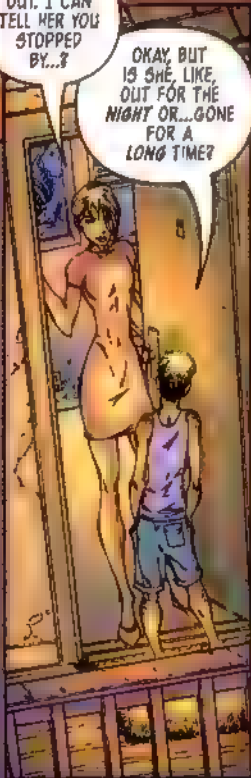
UH...

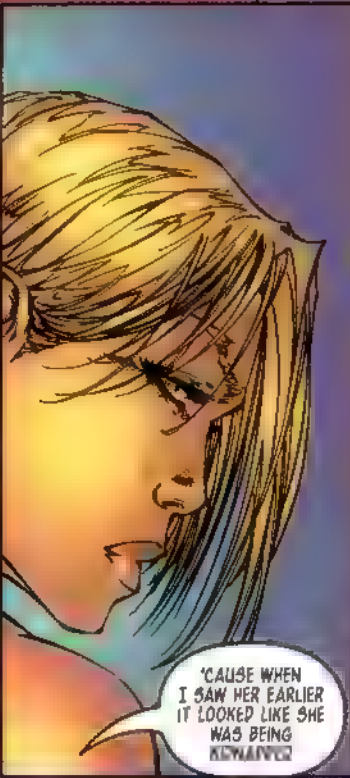
...IS ASPEN AROUND?

NO, SHE'S OUT. I CAN TELL HER YOU STOPPED BY...

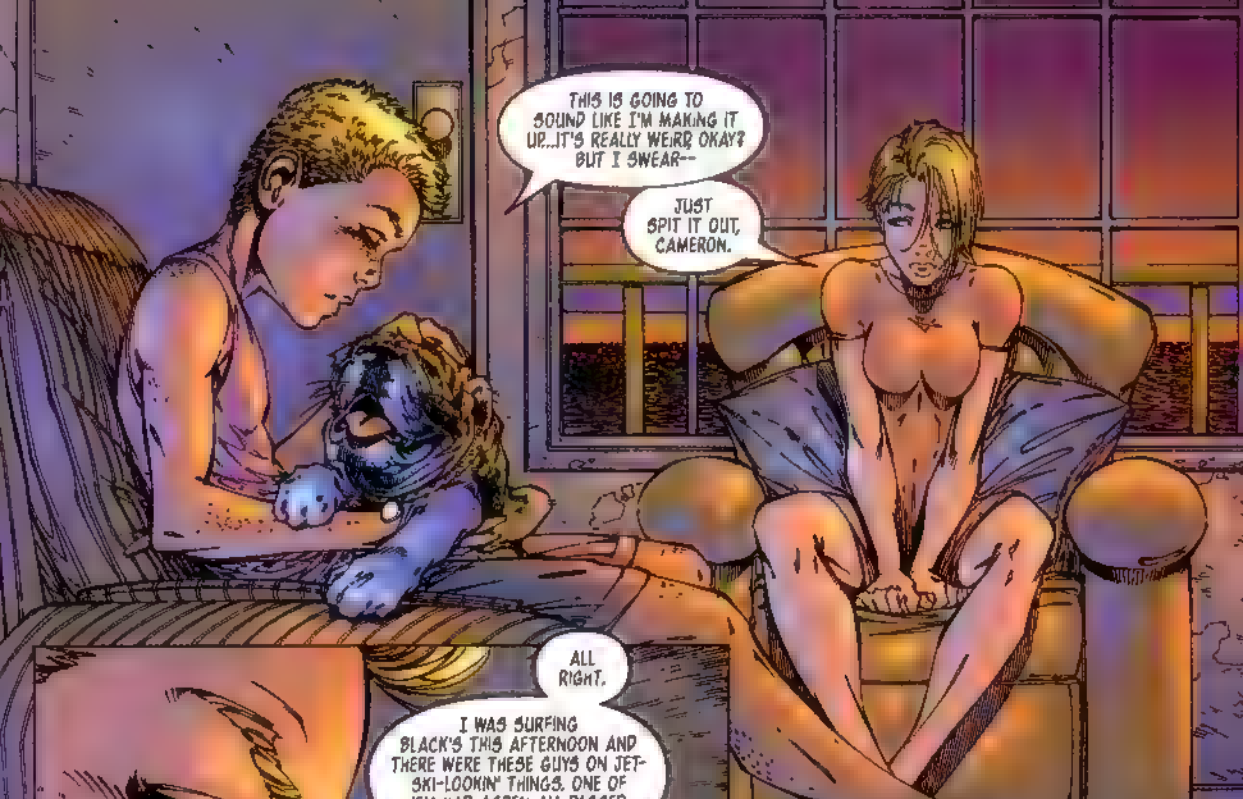
OKAY, BUT IS SHE LIKE, OUT FOR THE NIGHT OR...GONE FOR A LONG TIME?





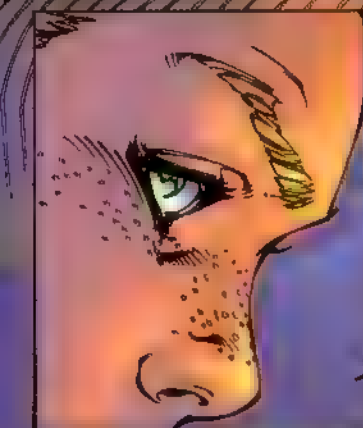


'CAUSE WHEN I SAW HER EARLIER IT LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS BEING KIDNAPPED



THIS IS GOING TO SOUND LIKE I'M MAKING IT UP...IT'S REALLY WEIRD OKAY? BUT I SWEAR--

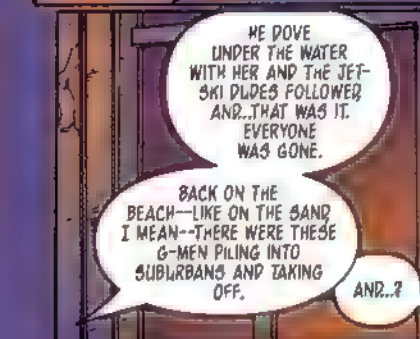
JUST SPIT IT OUT, CAMERON.



ALL RIGHT.

I WAS SURFING BLACK'S THIS AFTERNOON AND THERE WERE THESE GUYS ON JET-SKI-LOOKIN' THINGS. ONE OF 'EM HAD ASPEN ALL PASSED OUT ACROSS HIS LAP.

THEY WERE TAKIN' HER, LIKE, OUT INTO THE OCEAN, WHEN THIS OTHER DUDE POPPED OUT OF THE WATER AND KICKED JET-SKI-MAN'S ASS. THEN HE TOOK OFF WITH HER.



HE DOVE UNDER THE WATER WITH HER AND THE JET-SKI DUDES FOLLOWED AND...THAT WAS IT. EVERYONE WAS GONE.

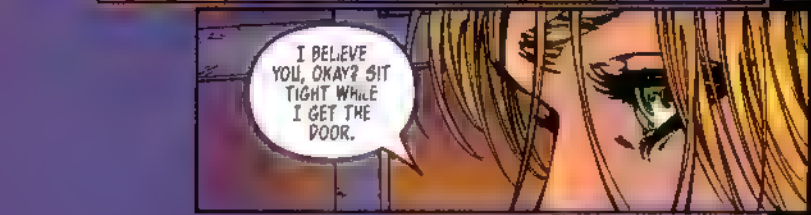
BACK ON THE BEACH--LIKE ON THE SAND I MEAN--THERE WERE THESE G-MEN PILING INTO SUBURBANS AND TAKING OFF.

AND...?

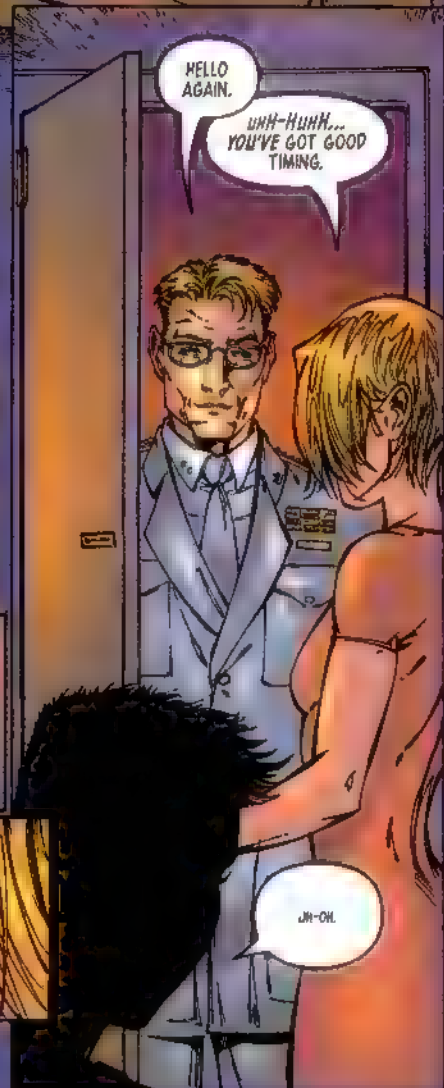


THAT'S IT, PRETTY MUCH. I KNOW IT SOUNDS LIKE B.S...

NOK NOK



I BELIEVE YOU, OKAY? SIT TIGHT WHILE I GET THE POOR.



HELLO AGAIN.

UHH-HUHH... YOU'VE GOT GOOD TIMING.

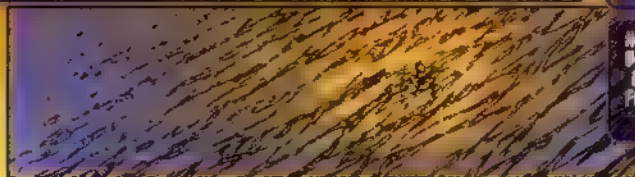
JM-OH.



NINETY-NINE PERCENT OF DAYS, NOTHING MUCH HAPPENS. YOU WORK, YOU SHOP, YOU GO TO SCHOOL, WHATEVER. YEARS LATER THEY'LL ALL BLUR TOGETHER LIKE WATERCOLORS.



IT'S THE OTHER ONE PERCENT—THE HIGHS AND THE LOWS—THAT DEFINE WHO WE ARE.



HOW DO YOU COPE WHEN YOU CATCH YOUR BOYFRIEND CHEATING? DO YOU SIT IN A DARKENED ROOM AND PILE ON THE CHOCOLATE, OR DO YOU FIND SOMETHING TO KEEP YOURSELF BUSY UNTIL THE PAIN GOES AWAY?

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO REPORTERS AFTER WINNING A GOLD MEDAL? ARE YOU FULL OF YOURSELF, OR DO YOU CONGRATULATE YOUR COMPETITORS?



THESE ARE THE KINDS OF THINGS THAT SHAPE US.

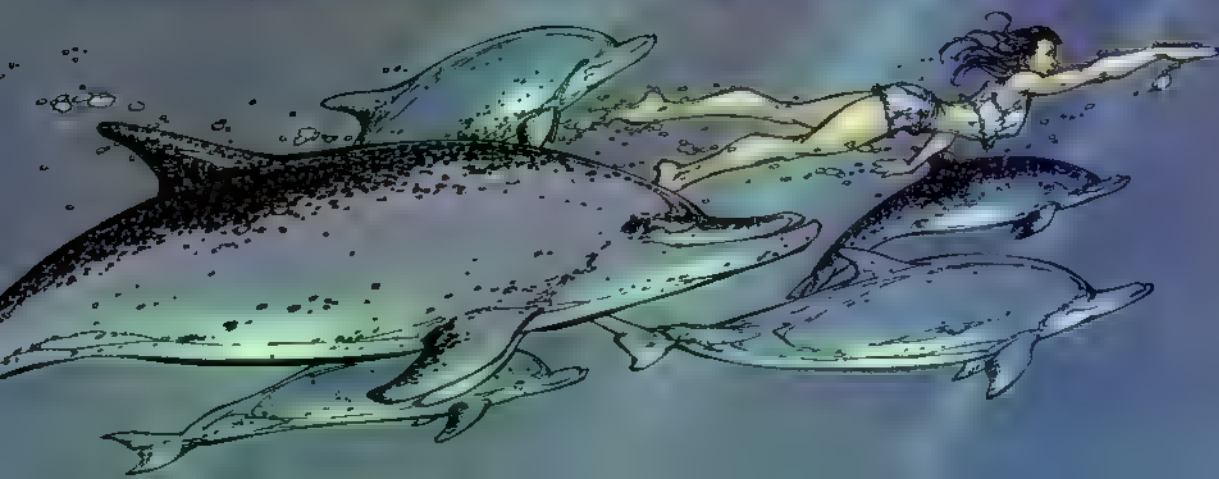
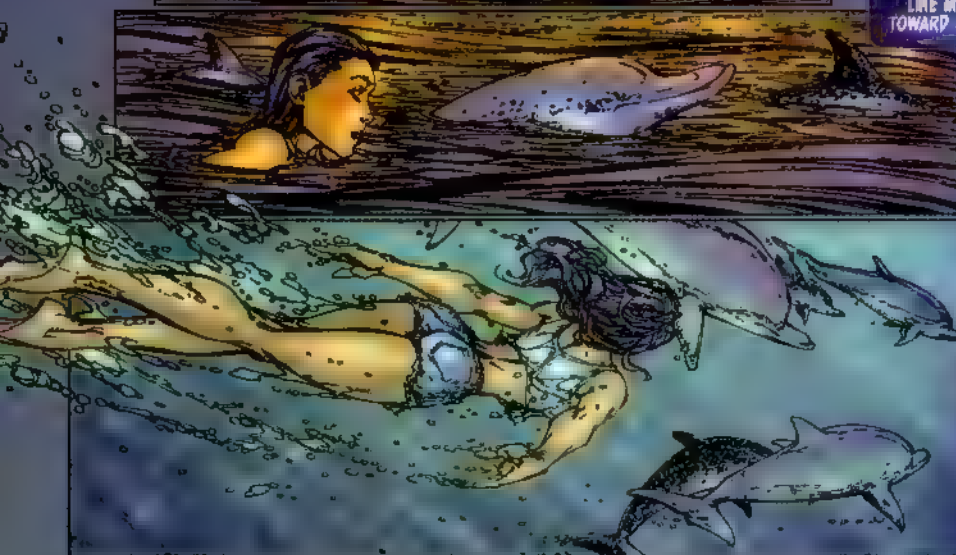
LIKE ANYONE, I'VE HAD QUITE A FEW DEFINING MOMENTS. BUT LATELY THEY JUST SEEM TO KEEP COMING ONE AFTER THE OTHER, LIKE MY LIFE IS ACCELERATING TOWARD SOME INDEFINITE ZENITH.

I WAS SELECTED TO JOIN THE SCIENCE TEAM AT THE DEEP MARINE DISCOVERY—QUITE AN HONOR FOR A YOUNG BIOLOGIST LIKE ME—

—ONLY TO GET THERE IN TIME FOR THE PMO TO BE BLOWN UP BY A TORPEDO.

...BUT NOT BEFORE MEETING A... BEING WHO LOOKED AT ME— INTO ME— LIKE HE'D KNOWN ME FROM BIRTH.

THEN I PROWLED. I THINK, OR MAYBE NOT.



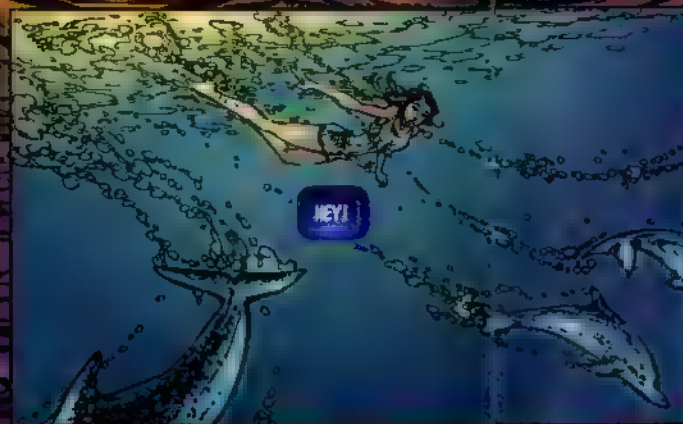
EITHER WAY, I WOKE UP
TO LEARN THAT MOST OF
THE PEOPLE ON THE DND
WERE KILLER

THEN THE PILOT
WHO FIRED THE TORPEDO
SHOWED UP AT MY HOUSE—
I'M STILL NOT SURE IF THAT
WAS A HIGH OR A LOW—

—AND NOW HERE I AM.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW
I GOT HERE, AND THE TRUTH
IS, I DON'T KNOW HOW
MUCH I CARE.

HIGH, LOW, HIGH, LOW...
THEY JUST KEEP COMING. AND THIS
IS THE FIRST CHANCE I'VE HAD TO
GIVE ANY OF THEM ANY THOUGHT.

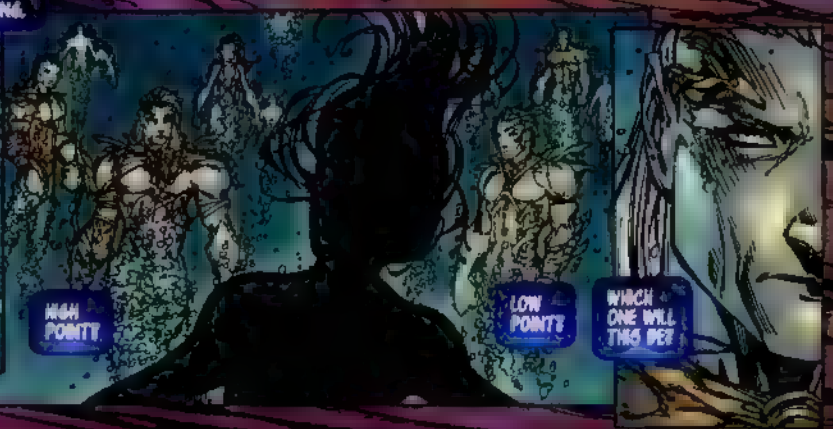
ALL I KNOW IS THAT SWIMMING
AS FAST AS THESE DOLPHINS IS
DEFINITELY A HIGH.



HEY!



OH, I KNEW
THIS WAS COMING.



HIGH
POINTY

LOW
POINTY

WHICH
ONE WILL
THIS BE?

IN SHORT,
ASPEN THIS IS THE
TRUTH: YOU'RE ONE
OF US, AND WE NEED
YOUR HELP.

I'D
SAY IT WAS
IMPOSSIBLE...

...EXCEPT...

...THAT IT
EXPLAINS ALMOST
EVERYTHING...

...THAT
I COULDN'T
EXPLAIN
BEFORE...



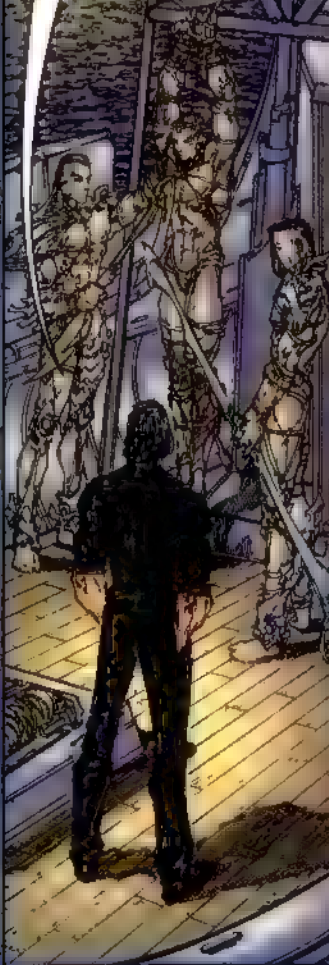
LOEWHERE IN
THE PACIFIC...

YOU'RE
GETTING
NOTHING OUT
OF ME.

SAVE THE
POSTURING.

REGARDLESS
OF WHATEVER KILLIAN
MAY HAVE TOLD
YOU...

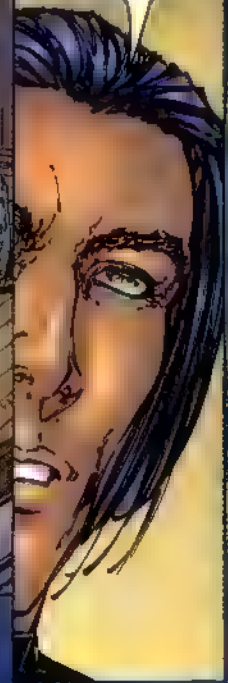
...I AM NOT
A COLD-BLOODED
KILLER,
HOWEVER...



...RIGHT NOW
I CAN'T AFFORD
TO BE PATIENT, SO TELL
ME WHAT I WANT TO
KNOW AND YOU
LIVE--

--OR BE A
PAIN IN THE ASS
AND I'LL FEED
YOU TO THE
PLANKTON.

WHERE'S
ASPEN?



KILLIAN'S
GOT HER BY NOW,
AND IF I KNOW HIM,
HE'S ALREADY GOT HER
BELIEVIN' THE OCEAN'S
MADE OF LIQUID
SUNSHINE.

TALK ABOUT
HIGHS AND LOWS...

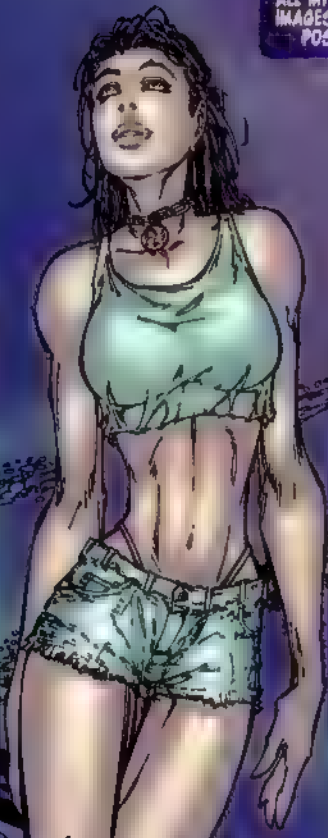
ALL MY LIFE I'VE HAD FLASHES--
IMAGES--OF WHAT LIFE COULD BE--
POSSIBILITIES--DREAMS--

...AND SUDDENLY
THEY'RE REALITY AND
I AM LIVING A
DREAM--

MY LIFE BEFORE TODAY
WAS LIKE POROTHY'S BEFORE
SHE WOKE UP IN OZ. MY
CONCEPTION OF WHAT'S
POSSIBLE--OF WHAT'S REAL--
HAD EXPANDED A
THOUSANDFOLD.

MY WHOLE LIFE
THE OCEAN REALLY HAS BEEN
TALKING TO ME, AND ONLY NOW
AM I FINALLY LEARNING TO LISTEN.

I CAN'T WAIT TO
FIND OUT WHAT ELSE
KILLIAN HAS TO
TEACH ME.



KILLIAN'S
TRAININ' HER
TO BE A
KILLER.

I'M GUESS HE'S
STARTIN' HER WITH BASIC
SKILLS AND GETTIN' HER
USED TO WORKIN' THE WATER.

BUT HIS GOAL ANY
TO TEACH HER TO MAKE ICE
SCULPTURES. KILLIAN WANTS A
LIVING WEAPON, AND HE KNOWS
IF HE HANDLES HER RIGHT,
HE'S GONNA HAVE ONE.

SHE'S GOT THE TALENT,
WE ALL KNOW THAT. I MEAN,
YOU KNOW, WE ALL KNOW
WHO SHE IS.

BUT UNTR. HER SKILLS ARE
UP TO SNIP. SHE'S GOTTA
KNOW WEAPONS, SO I'M GUESS
KILLIAN'S GETTIN' SOME OF
THAT IN THERE.

I ASKED YOU
WHERE SHE WAS, NOT
WHAT SHE WAS
DOING.

SHE'S
AT EASTER
ISLAND...

...ALONG WITH
A COUPLE HUNDRED
OF KILLIAN'S
FINEST.

I'D HAVE TO BE A MURDER TRY
TO PENETRATE KILLIAN'S STRONGHOLD
WITHOUT AN ARMY BEHIND ME. IF I FAIL,
NO ONE CAN STEP UP TO TAKE MY PLACE.

I'M JUST GONNA HAVE TO TRUST
THAT I CAN UNDO WHATEVER DAMAGE
KILLIAN DOES TO ASPEN...

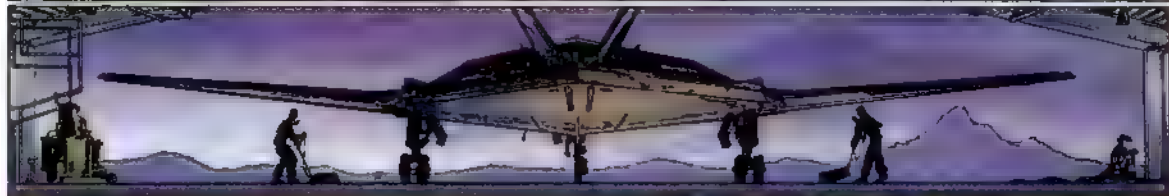
AND MOVE ON
A DIFFERENT FRONT.

I'M GONNA
TO NEED HELP.

SPECIALIZED
HELP.



"YOUR AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST THE U.S.S. SEA WOLF WERE INTOLERABLE, AND OUR RESPONSE WAS COMPLETELY JUSTIFIED."



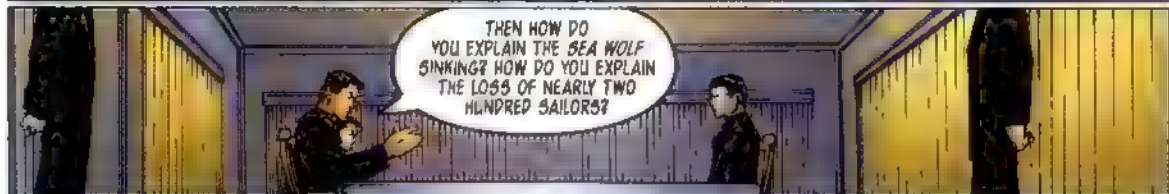
CONFERENCE ROOM A

PEARL HARBOR NAVAL BASE

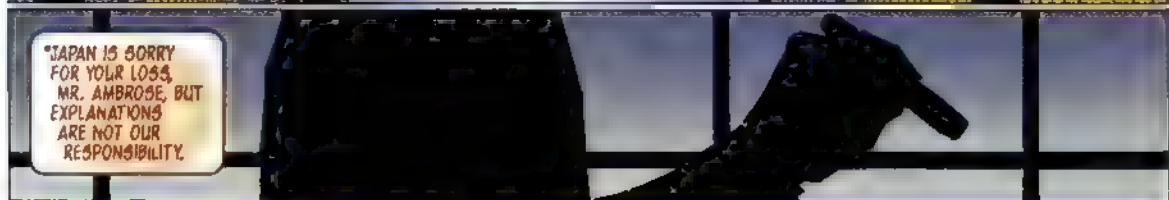
"FORGIVE ME, MR. AMBROSE. PERHAPS I WAS UNCLEAR. RECORDINGS CONFIRM THAT OUR PILOTS WERE GIVEN NO ORDERS TO FIRE ON THE SEA WOLF—



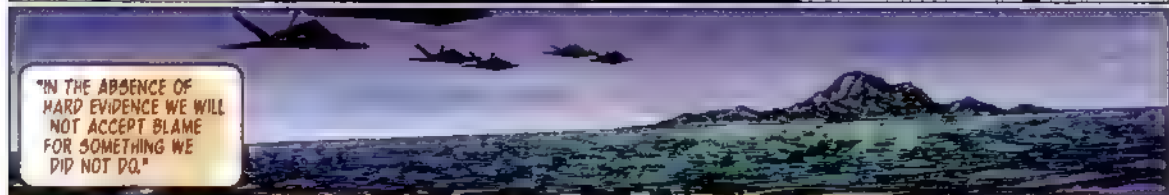
"—AND THEREFORE WE WILL NOT CONCEDE THAT THEY DID INDEED FIRE."



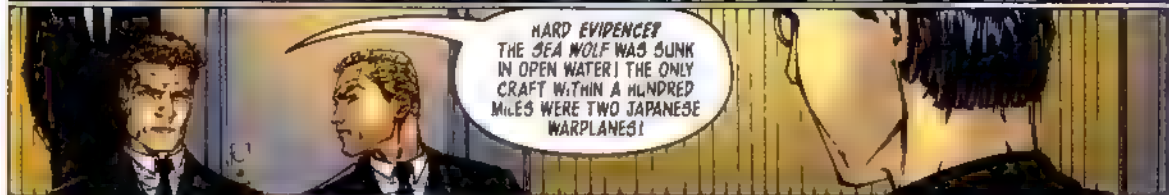
THEN HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE SEA WOLF SINKING? HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE LOSS OF NEARLY TWO HUNDRED SAILORS?



"JAPAN IS SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS, MR. AMBROSE, BUT EXPLANATIONS ARE NOT OUR RESPONSIBILITY."



"IN THE ABSENCE OF HARD EVIDENCE WE WILL NOT ACCEPT BLAME FOR SOMETHING WE DID NOT DO."

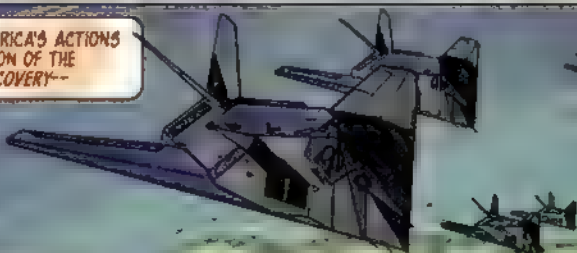


HARD EVIDENCE? THE SEA WOLF WAS SUNK IN OPEN WATER! THE ONLY CRAFT WITHIN A HUNDRED MILES WERE TWO JAPANESE WARPLANES!

"MR. AMBROSE, THOSE TWO PLANES,
ALONG WITH THEIR FLIGHT DATA RECORDERS--
AND THEIR CREW--NOW REST AT THE BOTTOM
OF THE PACIFIC, COURTESY OF YOUR
AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS.



"ADDITIONALLY, AMERICA'S ACTIONS
IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
DEEP MARINE DISCOVERY--

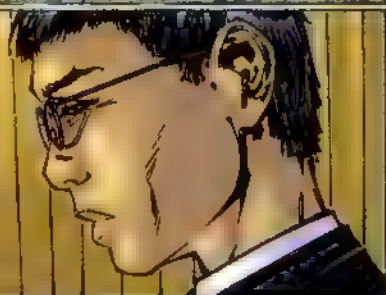


"--WHICH COST HUNDREDS OF
JAPANESE LIVES--HAVE NEVER
BEEN SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED."

AND TRANSCRIPTIONS
OF RADIO TRANSMISSIONS
DURING AN ATTACK ON A
JAPANESE MINING STATION IN
THE PACIFIC INDICATE AMERICAN
INVOLVEMENT IN THAT
ATTACK.

IT IS YOU
WHO SHOULD BE
MAKING
EXPLANATIONS
TO US.

BUT REGARDLESS,
UNTIL WE'VE RECOVERED
THOSE RECORDERS, WE WILL
NOT ADMIT TO ANY AGGRESSIVE
MANEUVERS AGAINST THE
SEA WOLF OR ANY OTHER
VESSEL BELONGING TO THE
UNITED STATES.



AM. WELL,
UNTIL SUCH TIME
AS YOU CAN PROVE THAT
JAPAN DID NOT SINK THE
SEA WOLF, THE UNITED
STATES WILL ASSUME
THAT YOU DID.

IT IS
THE ONLY
ASSUMPTION
THAT FITS THE
ESTABLISHED
FACTS.





THIS
CONVERSATION
IS OVER.



Back in San Diego...

...PA FUNK
SOUL BROVVAH
RIGHT ABOUT NOW,
PA FUNK SOUL
BROVVAH...



CHANCE
CALLOWAY?

YESS
RIGHT, FUNK
SOUL BROVVAH.
WHASSUP...?

NOT A WHOLE
LOT...BROVVAH. WHY
DON'T YOU COME
WITH US?



HEY,
RIGHT ON...! WE GONNA
GET S'MORE
DRINKS?

I JUS'
GOTTA GO
TO TH' ATM
FIRST...



UH-OH!
I'M FALLING!



WHOA!

POKE!

I DINT
MEAN IT,
I JUS' FELL,
Y'KNOW?



DRUNKEN
GOT...



IT'S ALL
RIGHT, NEVER
MIND WE'LL...
UH...?

AAAH

WHOA.

CHECK
IT OUT,
NOW...

YOU'RE
DA FUNK SOUL
BROVVAH!

HE
WENT UP,
HE CAME
DOWN...

TRUST ME,
GUY. THIS IS NOT
SOMETHING YOU WANT
TO GET MIXED
UP IN.

SURF

NO?



TOO
LATE,

GRINCH...

UGH...!



GAHHH!

STAY OUT
OF MY WAY AND
I'LL LEAVE YOU
ALONE.



CHANCE?
MY NAME'S
CANNON HAWKE.
I NEED YOUR
HELP.

I'M AFRAID
IT'S URGENT AND...
WE'LL HAVE TO...
START...

NOFF
NOFF!



YOU
ALL
RIGHT?

THA' WAS
FUNKY, SOUL
BROVVAH!

"WILLIAN, SHE'S
NOT READY."

YOU'VE HARDLY TAUGHT
HER THE FIRST THING ABOUT
ACTUAL FIELD--

SHE KNOWS MORE--
A LOT MORE--THAN I KNEW
THE FIRST TIME I WENT
OUT.

YOU'RE WORRYING TOO
MUCH, KYLA. WHAT SHE LACKS IN
EXPERIENCE SHE MAKES UP FOR
IN TALENT. SHE'LL BE FINE.

IF YOU SAY SO...
BUT I STILL THINK IT'D BE
PRUDENT TO GIVE HER SOME
TIME TO DEVELOP BEFORE
YOU DEPLOY HER.

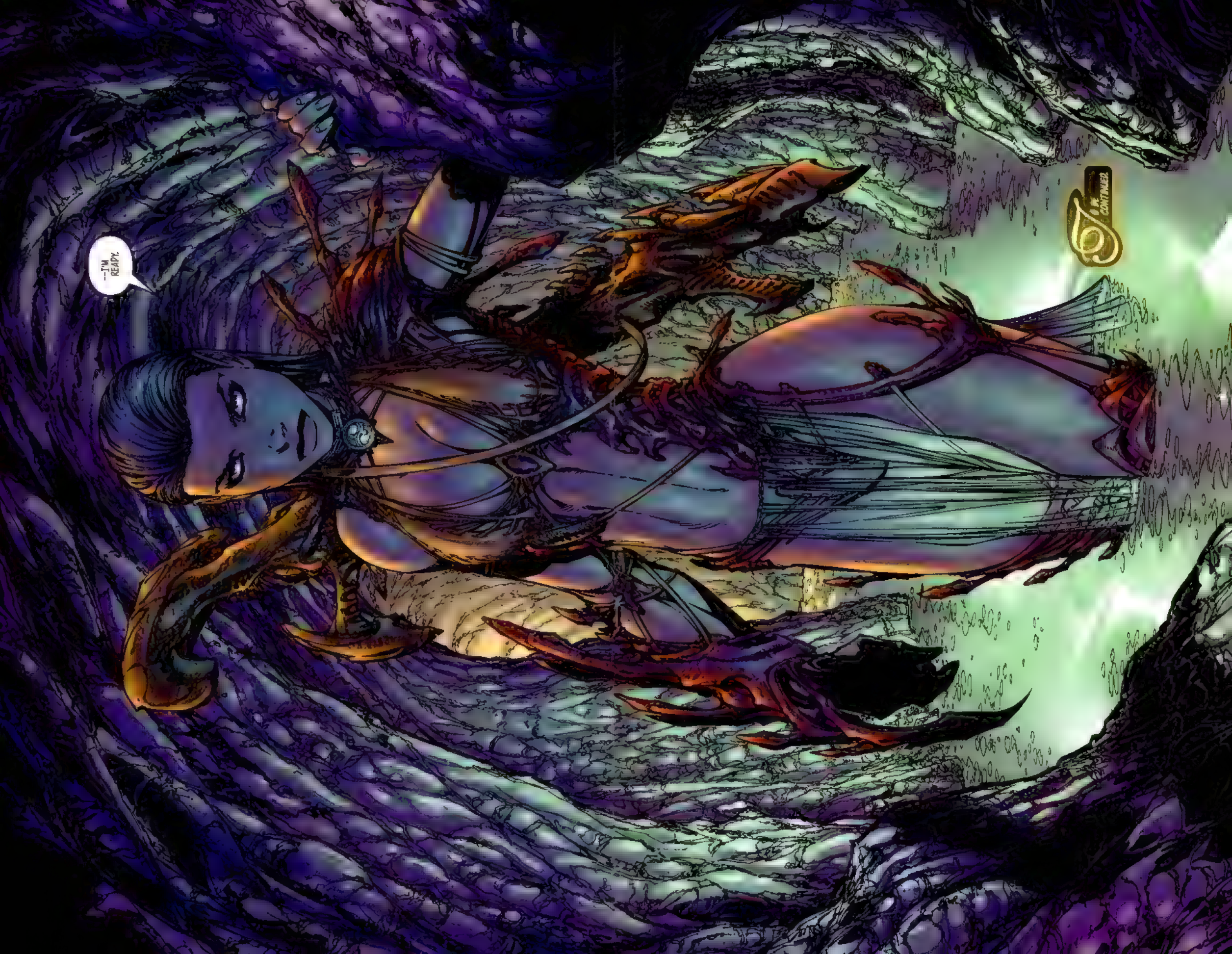
IF WE HAD THE TIME FOR
THAT, KYLA, I'D GIVE EVERY ONE
OF US ADDITIONAL TRAINING. AS
IT IS, A WEEK FROM NOW--

THEN GIVE
HER THAT WEEK.
EVERY MOMENT
COUNTS.

IT'S
OKAY,
KYLA--

--I'M
READY.

6
WE
CONTINUED



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Image

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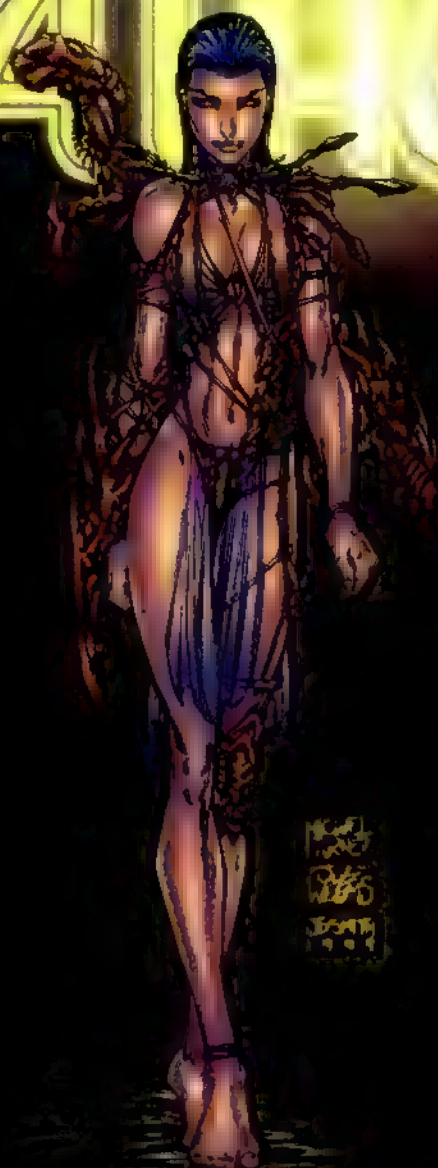
TURNER

O'NEIL

WEEMS

SMITH

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM™



Michael Turner
O'Neil
Weems
Smith

FATHOM *an Image Comics production*



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS. One above, one below.

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Sean Parsons and Jose "JAG" Guillen

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TOP COW



FOR
image
COMICS

JAN'S MARDER
image director

COSTA RICA

I'M DOING
THE RIGHT
THING

I KNOW
IT'S RIGHT
AND JUST

EVERYTHING IS JUST
SO NEW. I'VE BEEN SUMMERGED
IN A NEW WAY OF LIFE:
TRAINING WITH WEAPONS,
LEARNING TO WORK WATER,
ADJUSTING TO THE POLITICS
OF A ARMY OF SOLDIERS.

I'M NOT USED TO SUCH
A VIOLENT AGENDA. I'M USED
TO STUDYING BIOLOGY AND
SOCIALIZING ON FRIDAY NIGHTS
AND DRINKING ON SUNDAYS.

I'M USED
TO LIVING
WITH
BLOODS

AND NOW—
IT'S BARELY BEEN A MONTH—
I'M LITERALLY WORKING
TOWARD A NEW WORLD
ORDER.

I BELIEVE WHAT WE'RE
DOING IS RIGHT. I'M ONE OF THEM—
I AM—AND I CAN'T IGNORE THAT
BEING ONE OF THEM MEANS DOING
THINGS I NEVER WOULD HAVE
CONSIDERED BEFORE. NEVER EVEN
CONCEIVED OF IT'S JUST
SO MUCH, SO FAST.

IT'S
OVERWHELMING.

IF I PUT MY HEAD
DOWN AND KEEP PUSHING,
SOONER OR LATER THE
POUNTS WILL
UNRAVEL.

SOONER WOULD BE GOOD.
THIS IS MY FIRST MISSION.
I'M NERVOUS AND KILLIAN

KILLIAN
EXPECTS
A LOT
FROM ME.

POSITIONS.

I WANT TO IMPRESS HIM.
I WANT HIM TO TREAT ME LIKE
AN EQUAL—SCRATCH THAT.
HE DOESN'T TREAT ANYONE
LIKE AN EQUAL. BUT RIGHT NOW
I'M LIKE SOME LITTLE KID ON
DIAPYAK. AND IT'S RATHER BE
TREATED LIKE HE TREATS KYLA—
A BEACONING PART OF
MY TEAM.

I'VE GOT TO DO
WELL TOMORROW. I'VE GOT
TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT.
I'VE GOT TO SHOW THEM
I CAN HANDLE IT.

THEY'RE ALL SO CALM
AND CONFIDENT. I FEEL LIKE
I'M GOING TO MELT AND
I CAN'T HELP IT SHOW.



NERVOUS?

I'M READY.

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE TO FIND OUT.

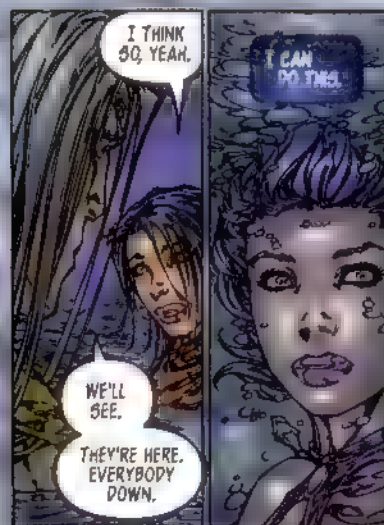
WE'RE GOING TO FACE ANOTHER BATCH OF SPECIAL NAVY, OR WHATEVER THE JAPANESE CALL THEIR NAVY SEAL EQUIVALENTS.

THEY'RE HERE TO SEEK AND DESTROY THE AMERICAN FUEL RESERVE STORED ONSHORE. THEY WON'T BE EXPECTING MUCH RESISTANCE, NOT THAT WE'D HAVE ANY TROUBLE IF THEY WERE.

FRANKLY, ANY TWO OF US-- ASPEN EXCLUDED-- COULD COMPLETE THIS MISSION. YET FOR ALL ITS SIMPLICITY, SUCCESS TONIGHT IS RELEVANT TO OUR ULTIMATE GOALS.

THEREFORE, THE FOUR OF US ARE HERE TO COUNTER-BALANCE ANY MISTAKES THAT ASPEN MIGHT MAKE.

SO IN THE BROADER SENSE, OUR MISSION HERE IS TO TEST YOU, ASPEN. CAN YOU APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED IN THE REAL WORLD? CAN YOU KEEP YOUR HEAD IN COMBAT?



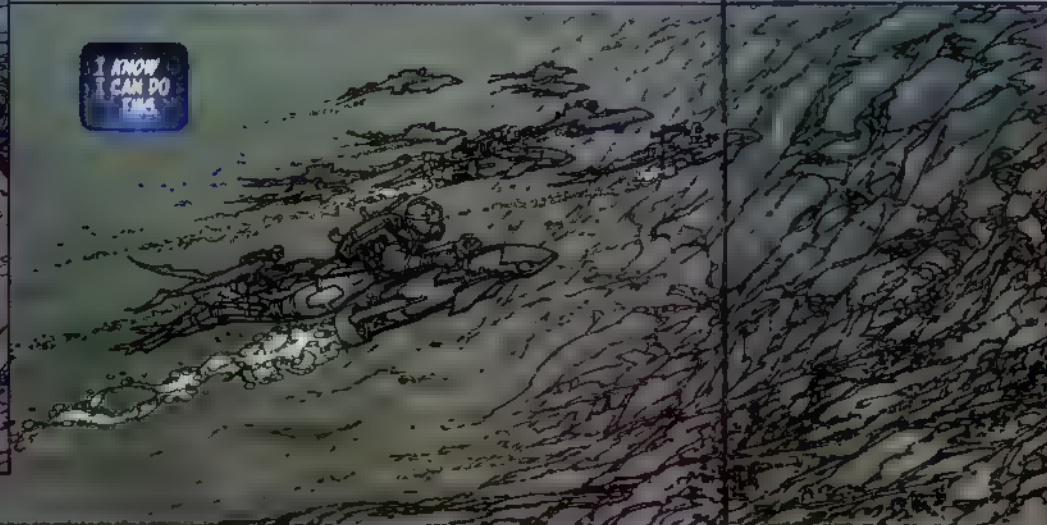
I THINK SO, YEAH.

I CAN DO THIS.

WE'LL SEE.

THEY'RE HERE. EVERYBODY DOWN.

I KNOW I CAN DO THIS.



SENTRY WEST TO CONTROL.



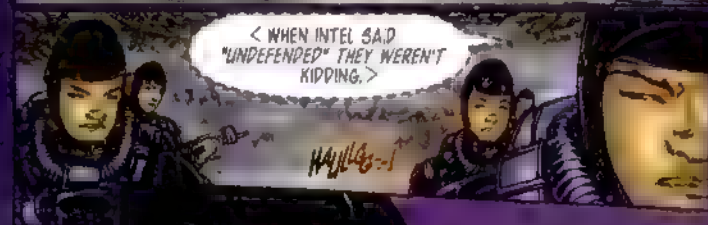
ALL CLEAR AT ZERO-TWO-TWELVE.





< I'M ON THE SENTRY. WE'RE ALL SILENT TILL THE EXPLOSIVES ARE IN PLACE. >

< HORSESHOES AND HAND GRENADES, TEAM. QUICK AND DIRTY. >

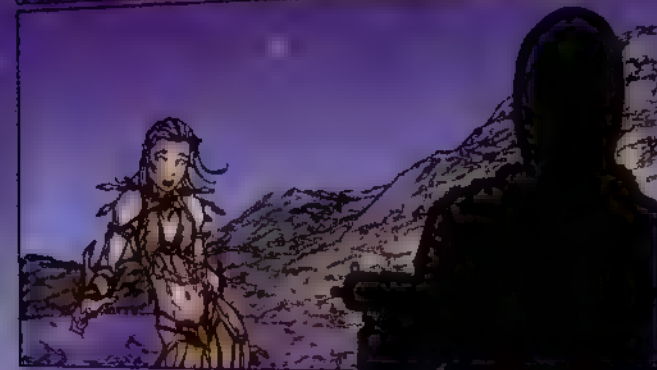


< WHEN INTEL SAID "UNDEFENDED" THEY WEREN'T KIDDING. >

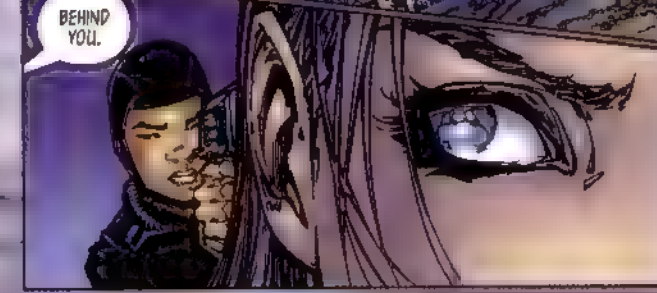


< INTEL WAS WRONG. >

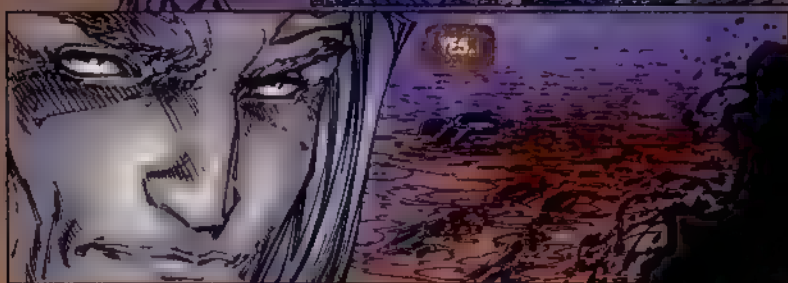
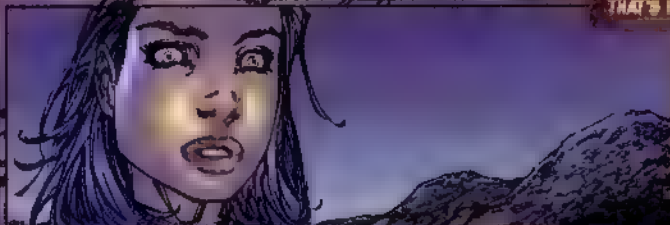
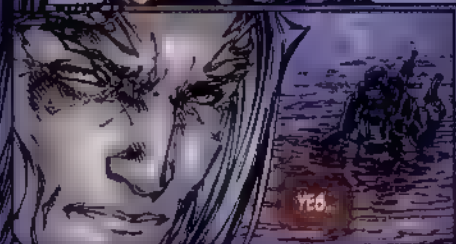
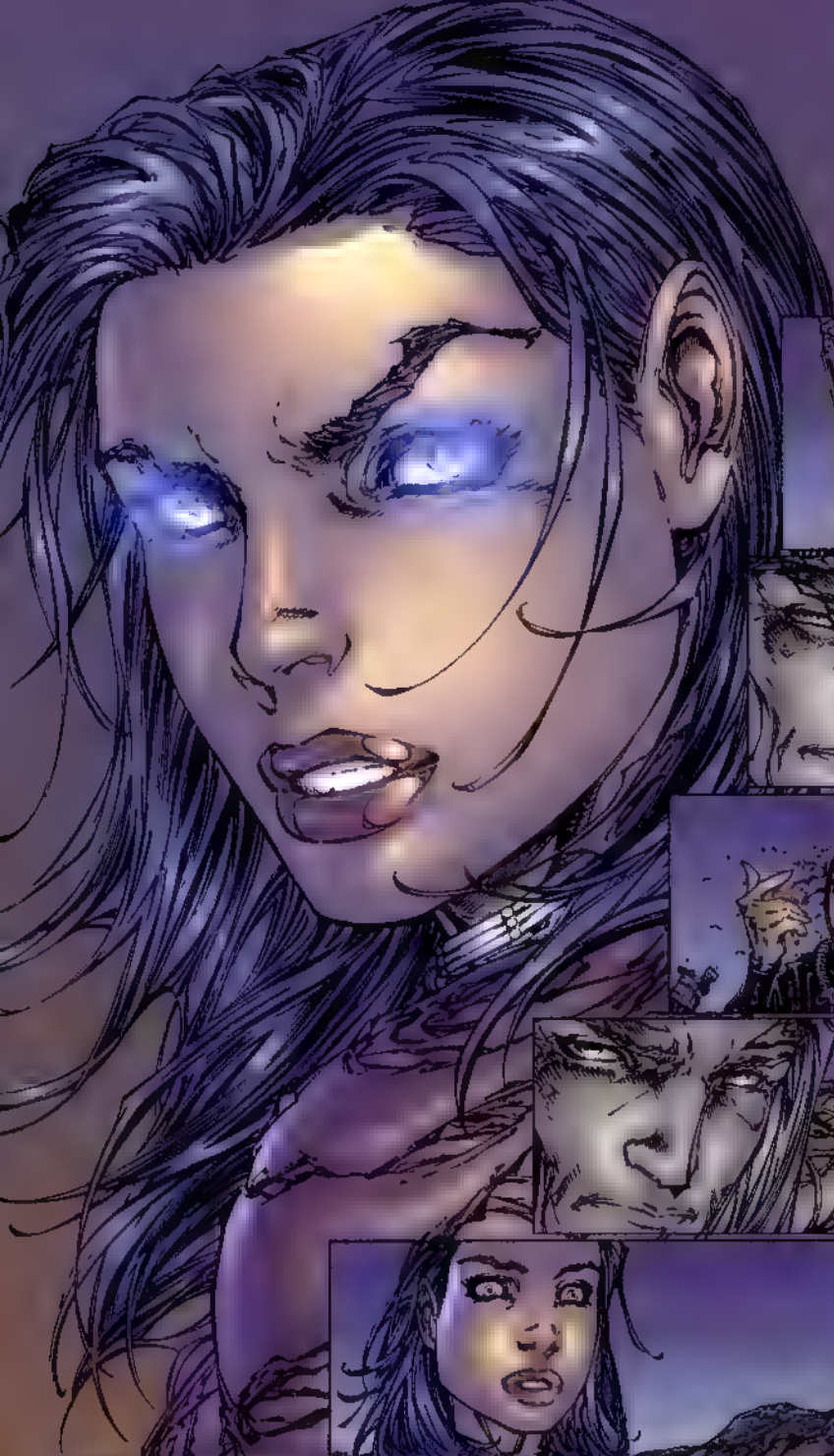
TAKE THEM QUICKLY.



NO, KYLA! I WANT HER TO DEFEND HERSELF!



BEHIND YOU.



GLEAH!



TWO DAYS LATER,
IN THE PACIFIC...

OUR RAID
ON THE COSTA RICAN
INSTALLATION CAME
TO NOTHING.

THE AMERICAN
ATTACKS ON OUR MINING
RIG, THEIR FLAGRANT ACT
OF WAR AGAINST OUR WAR-
PLANES, THEIR DESTRUCTION
OF SP3 SOUTH
TWO...

I'VE HAD
ENOUGH, WE AS
A NATION HAVE
HAD ENOUGH.

YOU
HAVE YOUR
AUTHORIZATION,
ANSWER THEIR
AGGRESSION IN
KIBBI!

GENTLEMEN,
THIS IS NOT
A TRAINING
MISSION.

YES,
SIR.

YOUR
OBJECTIVE...

"...IS THE COMPLETE
DESTRUCTION OF THE AMERICAN
WARSHIPS CURRENTLY PATROLLING
SECTOR 23.

"WE HAVE HAD A GAUNTLET
THROWN AT OUR FEET, GENTLEMEN,
BY AN AMERICAN NAVY THAT HAS
ENJOYED UNRIVALED SUPERIORITY
IN THE PACIFIC SINCE THE GREAT WAR.

"TODAY, WE CHALLENGE THAT
SUPERIORITY. TODAY WE FLY AS
HORNETS AGAINST A GIANT, AND
IT FALLS ON YOU TO STING AND
STING AGAIN UNTIL THE
GIANT TUMBLES.

"JAPAN HOLDS YOU
IN THE HIGHEST ESTEEM.
DO NOT FAIL HER.

"GOOD
LUCK."



ASTER ISLAND

FOR THE LAST TIME, ASPEN'S DEVELOPMENT IS NOT YOUR CONCERN.

IT IS MY CONCERN, BECAUSE I'M WATCHING OUT FOR HER AS A PERSON, NOT JUST AS THE TOOL YOU SEEM TO VIEW HER AS.

YOU'RE OVERSTEPPING YOURSELF, KYLA.

SINCE WHEN, MILLIANT? I'VE ALWAYS SPOKEN MY MIND. IT'S ONLY RECENTLY THAT YOU'VE STARTED TO OBJECT WHEN I DO.

IN LESS THAN A MONTH SHE'S TRAINED RELENTLESSLY, SHE'S GONE ON SEVERAL MISSIONS--

--AND NOW YOU'VE GOT HER POWERING UP THE APPARATUS. YOU'RE WORKING HER TOO HARD AND YOU'RE GOING TO BURN HER OUT.

ENOUGH, KYLA. YOU KNOW WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO CoddLE ANYONE. LET ALONE SOMEONE WITH THE POTENTIAL THAT ASPEN HAS.

WE PARTICULARLY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR WEAKNESS LIKE BEING "BURNED OUT."

IF I HAD ASPEN'S RAW TALENT, I COULD POWER THE APPARATUS QUICKLY ENOUGH MYSELF. AS IT IS, WE MUST EACH DO THAT WHICH WE ARE BEST AT.

SHE CAN DO WHAT NO ONE ELSE CAN.

THEREFORE SHE WILL DO IT.

I'M READY TO BEEN ASPEN

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

AM I SO EAGER TO IMPRESS THAT I'M WILLING TO KILL MYSELF TRYING?

I'M THE ENGINE
IN A MOLECULE
ASSEMBLY MACHINE.

I HAD A LONG TALK
ABOUT THE SCIENCE OF IT
WITH CLILLAN, BASED ON
THE WAY I MANIPULATE WATER.
HE'S CONVINCED THAT I CAN
WORK TWO MIRACLES—
THERE'S NO OTHER
WORD FOR IT.

—BUT MIRACLE OR NO,
I'M STILL SMACK DEAD
IN THE MIDDLE OF
NUCLEAR FUSION.

I SHOULDN'T
USE THE WORD
"DEAD" YET. NOT NOW.

THE TRUTH IS,
I'M NOT DOING THIS TO
IMPRESS CLILLAN OR ANYONE
ELSE. I'M SURE OF THAT.
I'M DOING IT BECAUSE IT
WILL WORK—I KNOW IT WILL.
I KNOW THE SCIENCE BETTER
THAN HE DOES.

—AND WITH EVERYTHING
ELSE HAPPENING TO ME, THERE'S
NO WAY I CAN PASS UP
THE CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING
COMPLETELY...TOTALLY...
ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OFF
THE NORMALITY SCALE.

IT'S STARTING.
MY FINGERS ARE
TINGLING.

THE HEAT...
GOTTA VENT IT...
MAKE ROOM
FOR MORE.

HYDROGEN, OXYGEN,
AND NEUTRON PLASMA...
COMBING TO FORM
HEAVY WATER. I CAN FEEL
EACH SPLIT MOLECULE
RECOMBINING.

THE ENERGY IS ENORMOUS...
I CAN HANDLE IT. I'VE JUST
GOTTA REGULATE IT.

I CAN HANDLE MORE!
JUST GOTTA USE
MORE OF MYSELF.

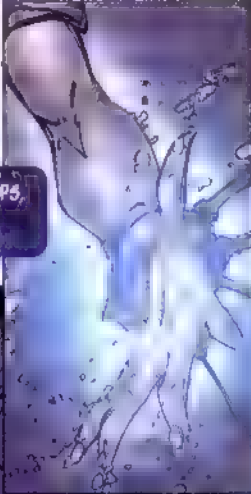


SHE'S
GOT IT. AND D.D
YOU SEE HOW
QUICKLY?

THAT'S
WHY SHE'S IN
THE TANK AND
WE'RE OUT
HERE.

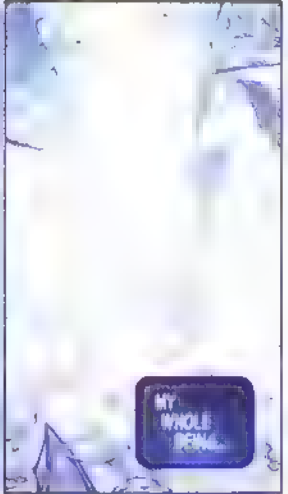
THIS WILL
TAKE LESS TIME
THAN I
THOUGHT.

IF I DISSOLVE MY FINGERTIPS,
THERE'S MORE CONTACT.
MORE CONDUCTIVITY.



IT'S BECOMING
AUTOMATIC... LIKE
MUSCLE MEMORY.

MY WHOLE
BODY WORKING
THE FRAME.



MY WHOLE
BODY.



WHOA!
TOO FAST!

I'M LOSING
CONTROL.

TRYING.



STOP.

CAN'T
STOP.

KILLIAN!
SLOW IT DOWN
BEFORE SHE KILLS
HERSELF!



YES.

YES. OKAY.
WE'RE DONE
HERE.

THIS
INSTALLATION
IS READY.



SHORTLY.

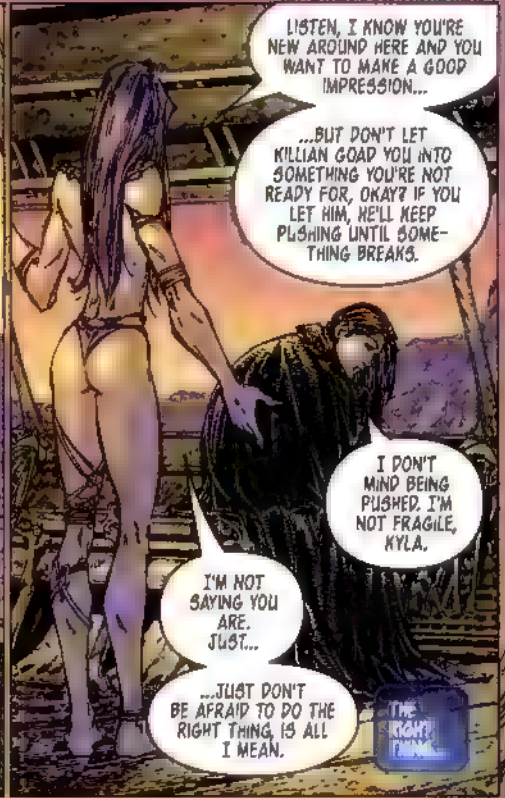
KNOCK
KNOCK.

HOW'RE
YOU
DOING?

RECOVERING. I FEEL
HOLLOW, LIKE I LEFT A FEW
OF MY PIECES BACK IN
THE TANK.

ARE YOU
HUNGRY?

MAYBE
IN A
WHILE.



LISTEN, I KNOW YOU'RE
NEW AROUND HERE AND YOU
WANT TO MAKE A GOOD
IMPRESSION...

...BUT DON'T LET
KILLIAN GOAD YOU INTO
SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT
READY FOR, OKAY? IF YOU
LET HIM, HE'LL KEEP
PUSHING UNTIL SOME-
THING BREAKS.

I DON'T
MIND BEING
PUSHED. I'M
NOT FRAGILE,
KYLA.

I'M NOT
SAYING YOU
ARE.
JUST...

...JUST DON'T
BE AFRAID TO DO THE
RIGHT THING, IS ALL
I MEAN.

THE
KYLE
FILM



A WORD,
KYLA.

AN IMPROMPTU
MEETING HAS BEEN CALLED.
I WON'T BE ACCOMPANYING YOU
TO THE SECOND INSTALLATION,
SO I'M LEAVING ASPEN
IN YOUR HANDS.

TAKE HER TO
THE SECOND INSTALLATION
AND FOLLOW TARAS'
INSTRUCTIONS.

AND KYLA.



YOU CAN WATCH OUT
FOR HER AS A PERSON. ALL
YOU WISH. TARAS WILL MAKE
SURE THE JOB GETS DONE.

THE U.S. NAVY,
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT'S
DISGRACEFUL.

BUT WHY?

WHEN SHE WAS COMING
UP FROM THE DND SHE EXPERIENCED
A LITTLE DECOMPRESSION SICKNESS. THE
NAVY WANTED TO TALK TO HER BUT SHE
LEFT THE HOSPITAL BEFORE
THEY COULD

SO THEY KIDNAPPED
HER? WHY DIDN'T THEY TALK TO
HER AT THE HOUSE?

I WAS
SENT TO THE
HOUSE. AS FOR WHY
THEY GRABBED HER...?
I'M NOT IN THAT
LOOP.

I CAN TRY
TO HELP YOU FIND
OUT, IF YOU'D
LIKE.

I'D
LIKE.

HOLD YOUR
THOUGHT. I'M GOING
TO THE LADIES
ROOM.

SIR, IT'S
CALLOWAY. THE
MATTHEWS GIRL
WAS SUCCESSFULLY
DELIVERED ONE
MINOR
HITCH--

--A TWELVE
YEAR OLD BOY SAW
IT HAPPEN AND TOLD HIS
STORY TO A REPORTER.
I'M SENDING IT THAT
HE WON'T BE BELIEVED
AS FOR THE
REPORTER...

BERNIE, LISTEN,
I'M ONTO SOMETHING HOT.
START DIGGING UP BACKGROUND
ON A WOMAN NAMED
ASPEN MATTHEWS.

YES, BERNIE, MY ROOMMATE.
NOW SHUT UP AND LISTEN. SHE WAS IN
THE HOSPITAL IN HONOLULU.

I WANT DETAILS!
WHAT EXACTLY WAS SHE
IN FOR, WHAT TREATMENTS
DID SHE RECEIVE, WHEN DID
SHE CHECK HERSELF
OUT...I WANT
ALL OF IT.

GIVE ME
ANOTHER TWENTY
MINUTES AND SHE'LL
BE AN IDEAL
PIPELINE FOR
DISINFORMATION.

THERE'S MORE. FIND
OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED DURING
HER OLYMPIC FIASCO--I TOLD YOU
ABOUT THAT, REMEMBER...? SHE GOT
A BUNCH OF MEDALS STRIPPED.
THERE YOU GO.

AND I WANT TO SEE
HER BIRTH CERTIFICATE AND
HER HIGH-SCHOOL DIPLOMA.
I WANT TO KNOW
EVERYTHING.

SHE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING TO DO
WITH NAVAL INTELLIGENCE. IT COULD BE HUGE.

"WORTH A SHOT. JUST A LITTLE
SOMETHING. SOMETHING, BERNIE.
WORTH AND SIMPLE."

TELL ME SOMETHING.
WHY ARE YOU SO KEEN TO
EXPLORE THE NAVY'S
SECRETS?

I DUNNO.
I GUESS I DON'T LIKE
TO SEE THE GOVERNMENT
INTERFERE WITH PRIVATE
CITIZENS.

AND IF IT
MEANS I GET TO
SPEND SOME TIME
WITH A CERTAIN
RATHER ATTRACTIVE
REPORTER...

AW, SHUCKS,
CAPTAIN CALLOWAY.
YOU'RE GONNA
MAKE ME
BLUSH.



RIGHT
HERE,
ADMIRAL.

YES,
SIR.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO
I DISCOVERED AN ALIEN
CRAFT ON THE PACIFIC FLOOR.
OUR STUDIES OF IT WERE
RECENTLY INTERRUPTED.

TEN YEARS AGO,
THE SPACE SHUTTLE ATLANTIS
COLLIDED WITH AN UNKNOWN,
RADAR-IMMUNE SATELLITE. LATER
REVEALED TO BE OF THE SAME
ALIEN MANUFACTURE.

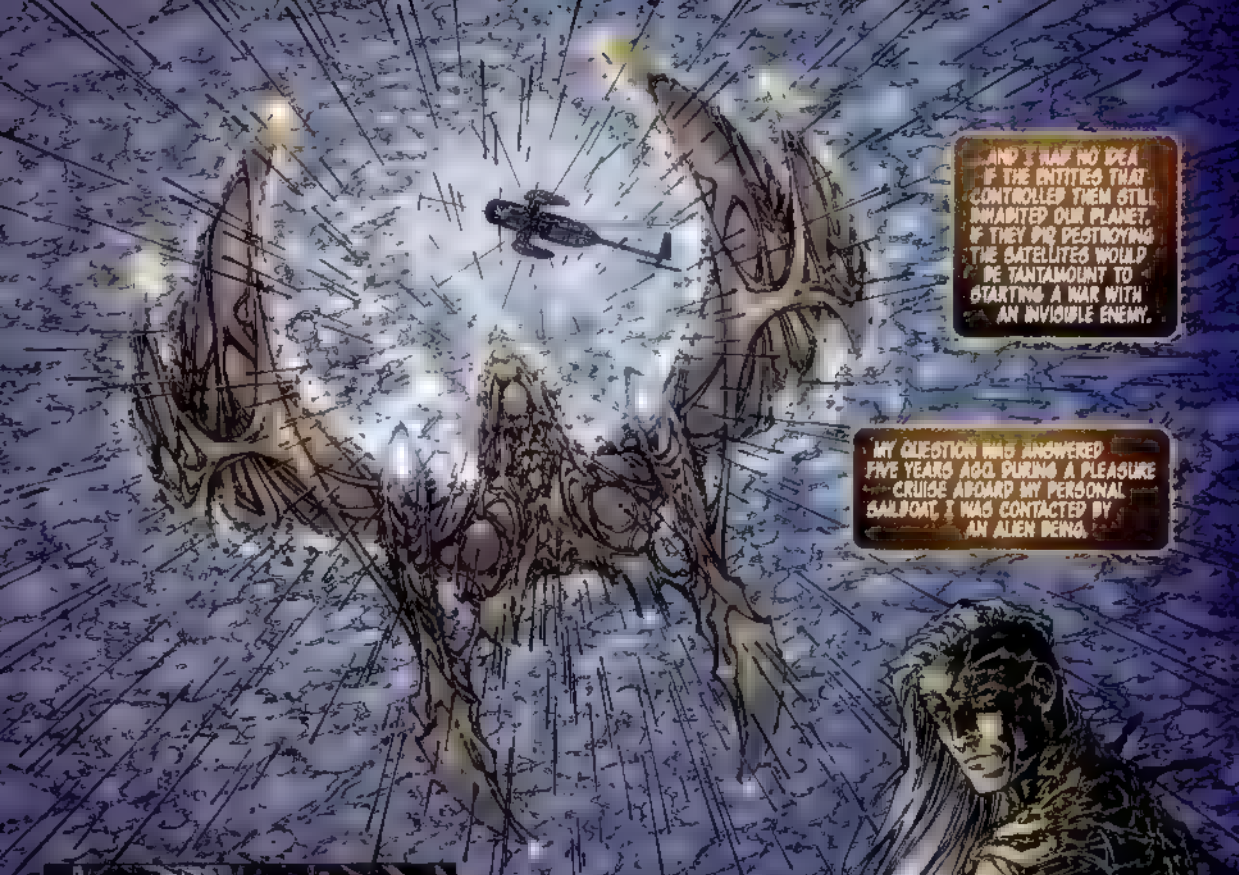
THE FRAGMENTS WE RECOVERED WERE
NEARLY FOUR THOUSAND YEARS OLD. ANALYSIS
THE SATELLITE POSSESSED BOTH THE OFFENSIVE
POTENTIAL OF A SOVIET CLASS FOUR MKV—
A WEAPON CAPABLE OF LEVELING A CITY
THE SIZE OF CHICAGO—

←AND THE SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY
OF OUR OWN SKY-EYE SATELLITES.

MORE IMPORTANTLY,
VISUAL EXAMINATION OF
THE SKIES VIA CLASSIFIED
SHUTTLE LAUNCHES
REVEALED A NETWORK
OF FURTHER
SATELLITES.

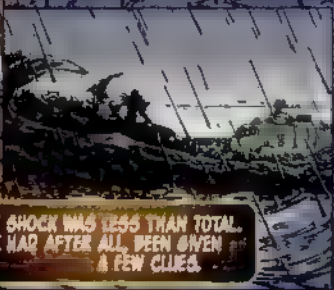
THEY COULD SEE US,
AND THEY COULD
DESTROY US.
AND WE HAD
NO IDEA WHO
"THEY" WERE.

I EXPENDED VAST ENERGY KEEPING
THESE DISCOVERIES SECRET.
REVEALING THEM WOULD INCITE
PANIC WITHOUT A SOLUTION...

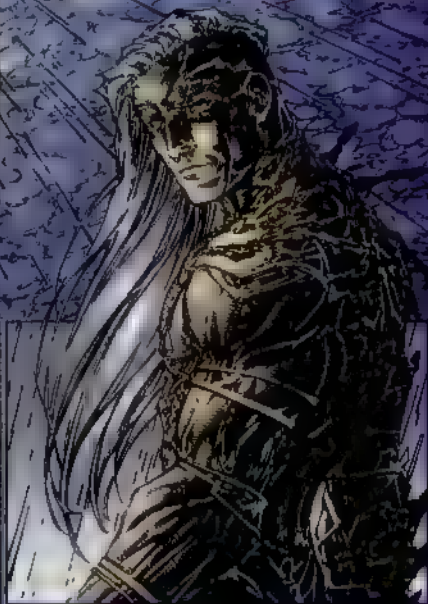


AND I HAD NO IDEA
IF THE ENTITIES THAT
CONTROLLED THEM STILL
INHABITED OUR PLANET.
IF THEY DID DESTROYING
THE SATELLITES WOULD
BE TANTAMOUNT TO
STARTING A WAR WITH
AN INVISIBLE ENEMY.

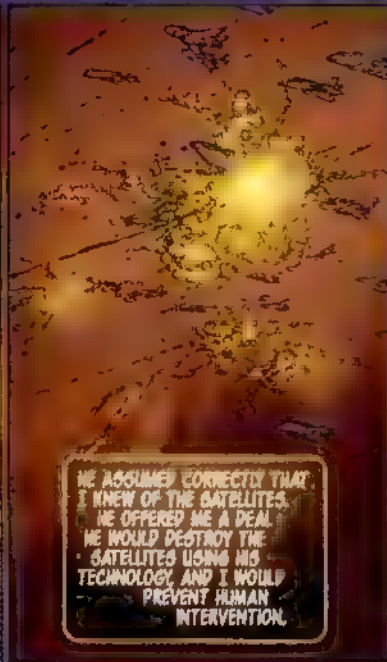
MY QUESTION WAS ANSWERED
FIVE YEARS AGO DURING A PLEASURE
CRUISE ABOARD MY PERSONAL
SALPOAT. I WAS CONTACTED BY
AN ALIEN BEING.



MY SHOCK WAS LESS THAN TOTAL.
I HAD AFTER ALL BEEN GIVEN
A FEW CLUES.



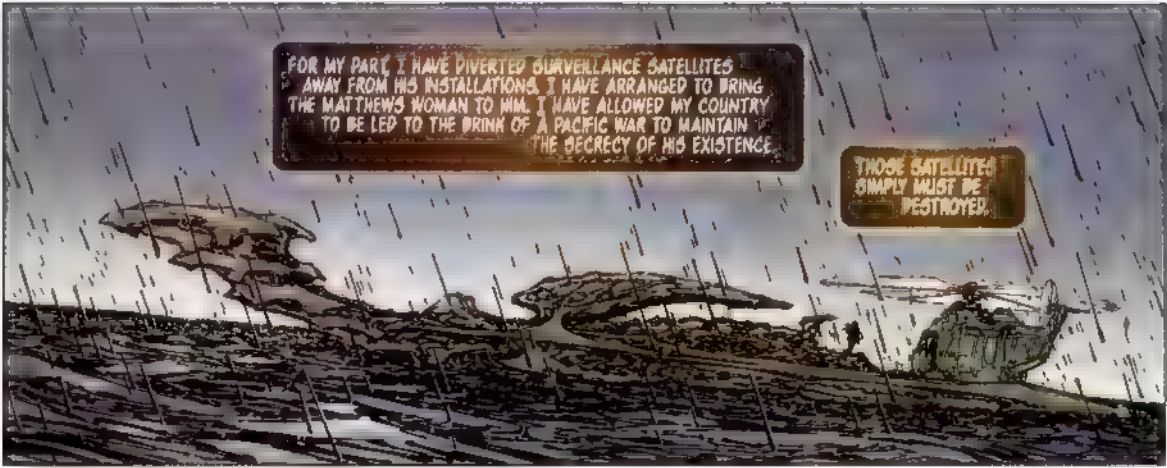
WHAT DID SURPRISE
ME WAS WHAT HE HAD TO
SAY ABOUT THE SATELLITES.
IN SHORT HE WAS INVOLVED
IN A STRUGGLE WITH HIS
OWN PEOPLE, AND FOR
REASONS OF HIS OWN HE
WANTED THE SATELLITES
DESTROYED.



HE ASSUMED CORRECTLY THAT
I KNEW OF THE SATELLITES.
HE OFFERED ME A DEAL
HE WOULD DESTROY THE
SATELLITES USING HIS
TECHNOLOGY, AND I WOULD
PREVENT HUMAN
INTERVENTION.

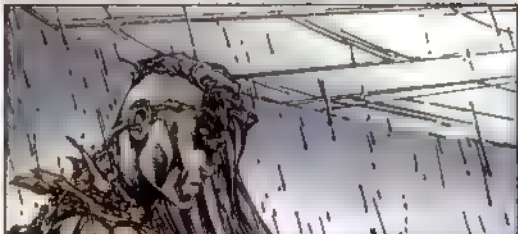


I AGREED EVER SINCE.
I HAVE SHARED A COMMON
PRIORITY WITH THIS BEING
WHO WOULD OTHERWISE
BE MY ADVERSARY.



FOR MY PART, I HAVE DIVERTED SURVEILLANCE SATELLITES
AWAY FROM HIS INSTALLATIONS. I HAVE ARRANGED TO BRING
THE MATTHEWS WOMAN TO HIM. I HAVE ALLOWED MY COUNTRY
TO BE LED TO THE BRINK OF A PACIFIC WAR TO MAINTAIN
THE DECECY OF HIS EXISTENCE.

THOSE SATELLITES
SIMPLY MUST BE
DESTROYED.



HE HAS, ON OCCASION,
LENT ME HIS CONSIDERABLE
STEALTH COMBAT ABILITY.

ONCE THE SATELLITES ARE DESTROYED
WE BECOME ENEMIES. WE EACH KNOW THIS,
YET WE DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE IT.

SO WE MANEUVER AND DECEIVE
AND SEEK THE UPPER HAND FOR THE
MOMENT THE INEVITABLE COMES.



THE SACRIFICES I HAVE
MADE HAVE STRENGTHENED
MY INTERESTS ELSEWHERE.
NO DOUBT MY ADVERSARY
FEELS THE SAME IS TRUE
FOR HIM.

IT'S
A CHESS
MATCH.

AND I
PLAY WITH
A MASTER.

NEAR NEW ZEALAND...

TARAS IS
THE GUY WHO
RUNS THIS
INSTALLATION.

HE'S A
MINDLESS THUG,
A KILLER WITH NO
CONSCIENCE. I'M
SURE HE THINKS
I'M SOFT-
HEARTED.

BASICALLY, HE AND I PRETTY
MUCH HATE EACH OTHER.

I
ASSUME
THAT...

...IS THE SECOND
INSTALLATION?

I LIKE
WHAT YOU'VE
DONE WITH THE
PLACE. TARAS,
THIS IS
ASPEN.

YES, THE
GREAT PRODIGY.
THE MACHINE IS
ON LINE. GET
HER READY.

I'M GOING
TO NEED A LITTLE
TIME, TARAS.

THE
SCHEDULE
CAN'T WAIT. BE
IN THE MACHINE
ROOM IN FIVE
MINUTES.

WORTHY...

AFTER LAST TIME,
WHEN THINGS GOT AWAY
FROM ME, I WAS WONDERING
HOW THIS WOULD TURN OUT.
NOW THAT I KNOW MY
THRESHOLD—WHEN TO PUT
THE BRAKES ON—IT'S
A LOT EASIER.

GOOD THING, TOO. I'M NOT SO
SURE TARAS WOULD SHUT THE MACHINE
DOWN THE WAY KYLIAN DID. I CAN SEE
WHY KYLA DOESN'T LIKE HIM.

THE FUSION
IS BECOMING LIKE
DIGESTION; MY BODY
JUST DOES IT WITHOUT
ME THINKING ABOUT IT.

HUM. NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,
THIS IS COMPLETELY IRRESPONSIBLE OF
ME TO BE DOING THIS SO BLINDLY.

THE QUESTION IS
WHAT IS ALL THIS ENERGY
FOR? I'M NOT A MORON—
IT'S GOT TO BE SOME KIND
OF WEAPON. BUT IN THE
EXCITEMENT OF DOING IT
THE FIRST TIME, I DON'T
THINK ABOUT THAT.

I WONDER IF THIS IS HOW
OPPENHEIMER AND THE OTHERS
FELT AT WHITE SANDS, WATCHING
THE FIRST A-BOMB GO OFF.

I WONDER IF THEY SAW
THEIR WORK AND RATHER
THAN TAKING PRIDE IN IT,
STARTED WONDERING
"AM I DOING THE
RIGHT THING?"

AFTER THE LAST
FEW DAYS, I KNOW I AM.
WONDERING, THAT IS.

KYLA!

GET AWAY
FROM THAT
SCREEN.

TARAS, YOU'VE GOT
THESE CALIBRATIONS ALL
WRONG.

THE CALIBRATIONS
ARE CORRECT. THE PROCEDURE
HERE IS NOT THE SAME AS AT
EASTER ISLAND.

YOU MIGHT
HAVE DONE
IRREVERSIBLE
DAMAGE.

IN THE FUTURE,
KYLA, LEAVE THE
MACHINES TO ME.

NOW GET
THE PRODIGY READY
FOR DEPARTURE.

SOON...

HOW'RE
YOU ADJUSTING,
ASPEN?

IT'S BEEN...
EDUCATIONAL.

I'M ESPECIALLY
IMPRESSED BY TARAS'
SINGLE-MINDED
DETERMINATION TO
GET THINGS
DONE.

LISTEN,
PRODIGY. I
ACCOMPLISH
THINGS. YOU'D
BEST BE SATISFIED
WITH KYLA'S
MOTHERING. YOU
WON'T GET ANY
FROM ME.

"HARD WORK
NEVER HURT
ANYONE."

DON'T MIND
TARAS, ASPEN.
THE WORLD NEEDS
ITS BRUTE LABORERS
JUST AS IT NEEDS
ITS BRAINS.

CONTROL,
THIS IS TRANSPORT
BETA-ZERO. AM I
CLEAR?

YES,
PROCEED
TO BAY
FOUR.

IS
THAT...?

MY GOD...

THIS IS WHERE
IT ALL STARTED.

To Be
Continued



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*I would like to dedicate this issue to the
loving memory of my grandmother,
Jo Magnum*
—Michael

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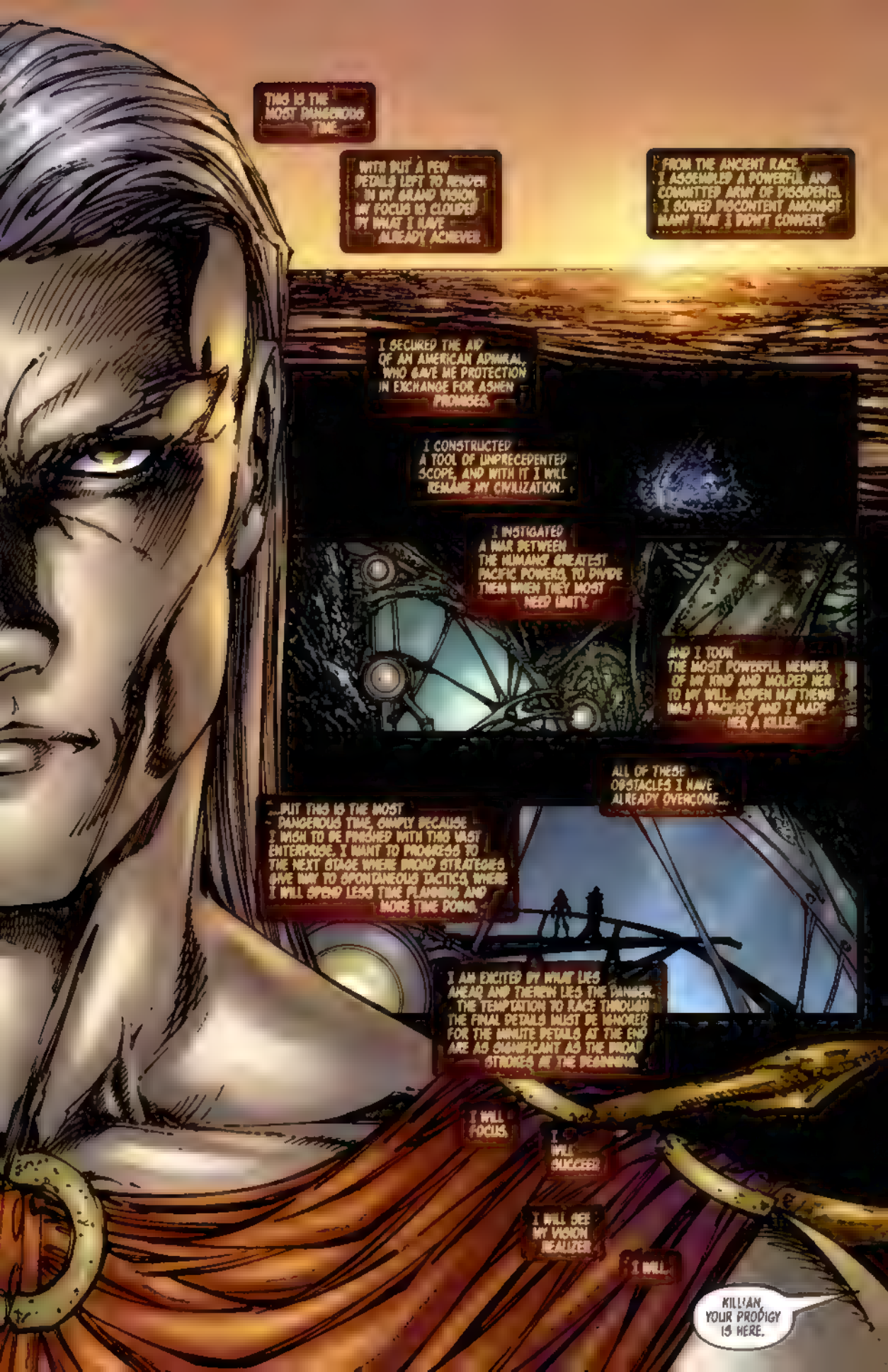
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THIS IS THE
MOST DANGEROUS
TIME.

WITH BUT A FEW
DETAILS LEFT TO REMOVED
IN MY GRAND VISION,
MY FOCUS IS CLOUDED
BY WHAT I HAVE
ALREADY ACHIEVED.

FROM THE ANCIENT RACE,
I ASSEMBLED A POWERFUL AND
COMMITTED ARMY OF DISSENTERS.
I SOWN DISCONTENT AMONGST
MANY THAT I WIGHT CONVERT.

I SECURED THE AID
OF AN AMERICAN ADMIRAL,
WHO GAVE ME PROTECTION
IN EXCHANGE FOR ASHEN
PROMISES.

I CONSTRUCTED
A TOOL OF UNPRECEDENTED
SCOPE, AND WITH IT I WILL
RENAME MY CIVILIZATION.

I INSTIGATED
A WAR BETWEEN
THE HUMAN'S GREATEST
PACIFIC POWERS, TO DIVIDE
THEM WHEN THEY MOST
NEED UNITY.

AND I TOOK
THE MOST POWERFUL MEMBER
OF MY KIND AND MOLDDED HER
TO MY WILL. ASPEN MATTHEWS
WAS A RACIST, AND I MADE
HER A KILLER.

ALL OF THESE
OBSTACLES I HAVE
ALREADY OVERCOME.

...BUT THIS IS THE MOST
- DANGEROUS TIME, SIMPLY BECAUSE
I WIGN TO BE FINISHED WITH THIS VAST
ENTERPRISE. I WANT TO PROGRESS TO
THE NEXT STAGE WHERE BROAD STRATEGIES
GIVE WAY TO SPONTANEOUS TACTICS, WHERE
I WILL SPEND LESS TIME PLANNING AND
MORE TIME DOING.

I AM EXCITED BY WHAT LIES
AHEAD, AND THEREIN LIES THE DANGER.
THE TEMPTATION TO RACE THROUGH
THE FINAL DETAILS MUST BE IGNORED
FOR THE MINUTE DETAILS AT THE END
ARE AS SIGNIFICANT AS THE BROAD
STROKES AT THE BEGINNING.

I WILL
FOCUS.

I WILL
SUCCEED.

I WILL SEE
MY VISION
REALIZED.

I WILL.

KILLIAN
YOUR PRODIGY
IS HERE.

FORGIVE ME
FOR SAYING SO,
BUT I DON'T GET
YOUR CONVICTION
IN HER. SHE'S WEAK
AND UNDISCIPLINED.
SHE'LL NEVER BE
A WARRIOR.

BE CAREFUL, TARAS.
SOMEDAY SOON HER ABILITY
WILL SURPASS YOUR OWN.
AND BELIEVE ME--YOU WON'T
WANT HER FOR AN
ENEMY.

RIGHT.

SHE'S
GETTING
READY,
ANYWAY.

YES.
ON TO
TACTICS,
THEN.



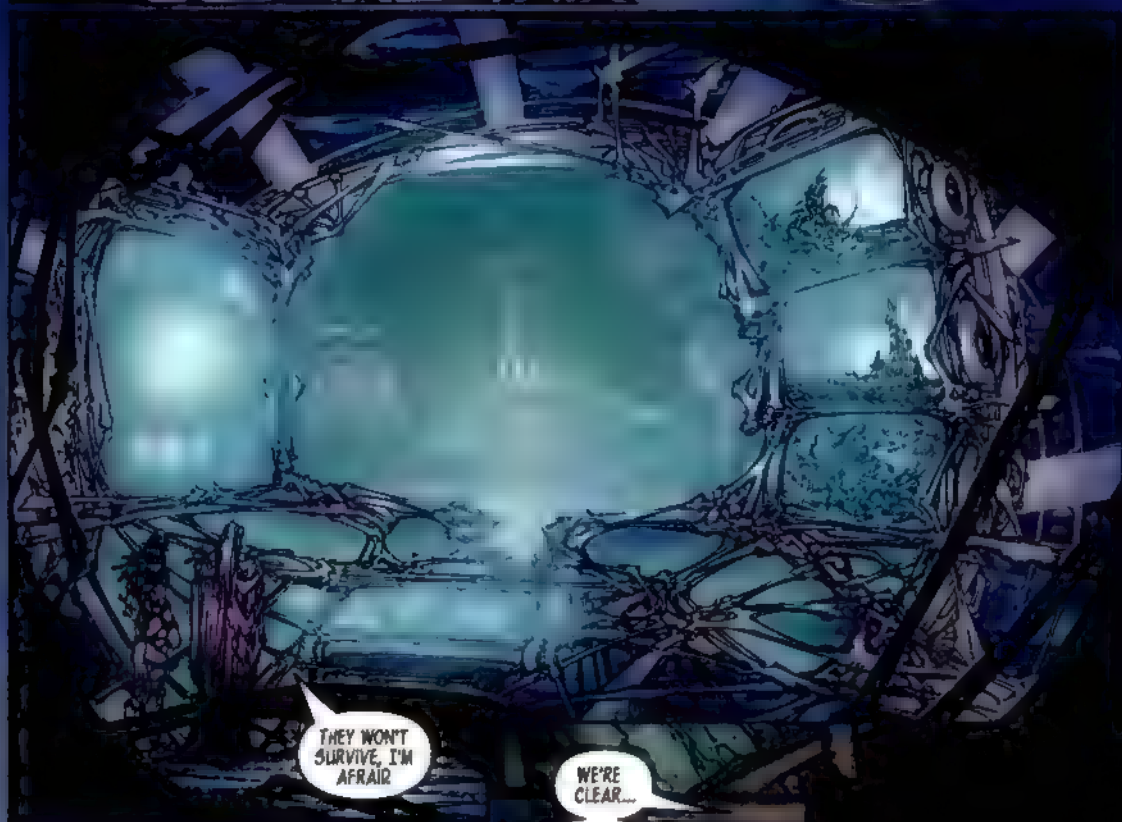


AS SOON AS THE THIRD
STAGE IS PRIMER I'M MOVING
FORWARD WITHIN THE HOUR I
NEED YOU TO LEAD FIFTEEN UNITS
HERE, TO THE EDGE OF
THE RED ZONE.

YOU WILL WAIT
THERE FOR ME. I WON'T
BE FAR BEHIND

I UNDERSTAND
HOW MUCH HUMAN
INTERFERENCE SHOULD
I EXPECT?

NONE.
AMERICAN AND
JAPANESE FORCES
ARE CURRENTLY IN
THE RED ZONE.



THEY WON'T
SURVIVE, I'M
AFRAID

WE'RE
CLEAR...

...AND THERE
ARE FEMALE
VOICES
AHEAD



SIR, I NEED
A SECOND TO
DE-CALCIFY MY
WEAPON.



WE'RE IN, CHANCE.
WE'LL BE READY FOR
EVAC IN APPROXIMATELY
TEN MINUTES.

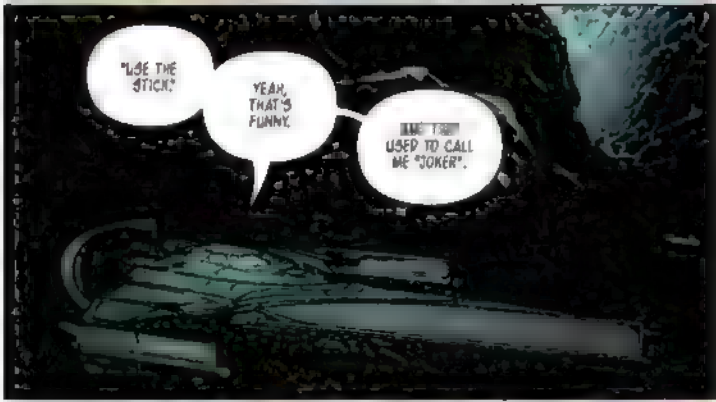
I'VE ANALYZED
YOUR PING PLAN,
CANNON, AND I'VE
FOUND A FLAW
IN IT.

GO
AHEAD.



I DON'T HAVE THE FIRST CLUE HOW TO DRIVE THIS... CONVERTIBLE... THING OF YOURS.

LIKE I TOLD YOU, CHANCE. IT'S LIKE FLYING ANYTHING ELSE. USE THE STICK. CANNON OUT.



"USE THE STICK."

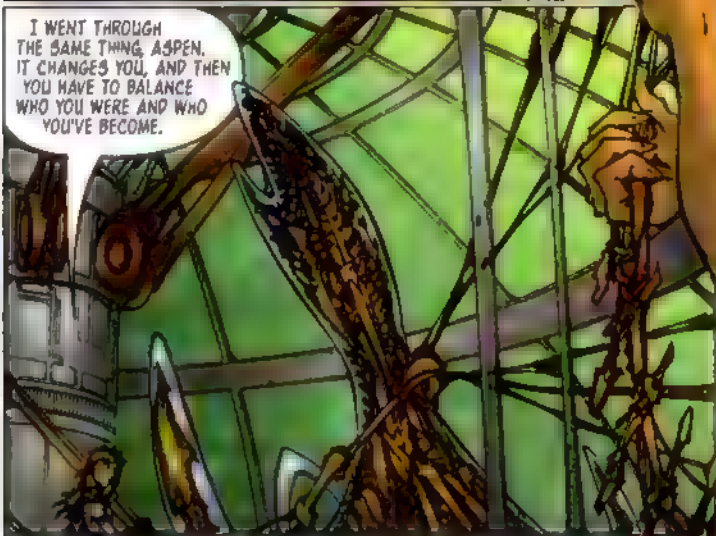
YEAR, THAT'S FUNNY.

THEY USED TO CALL ME "JOKER".



...AND THEN I SUCKED ALL THE WATER OUT OF THAT GUY... I KILLED HIM...

...AND I CAN'T FIND MY WAY BACK TO WHO I WAS BEFORE I DID IT.



I WENT THROUGH THE SAME THING, ASPEN. IT CHANGES YOU, AND THEN YOU HAVE TO BALANCE WHO YOU WERE AND WHO YOU'VE BECOME.

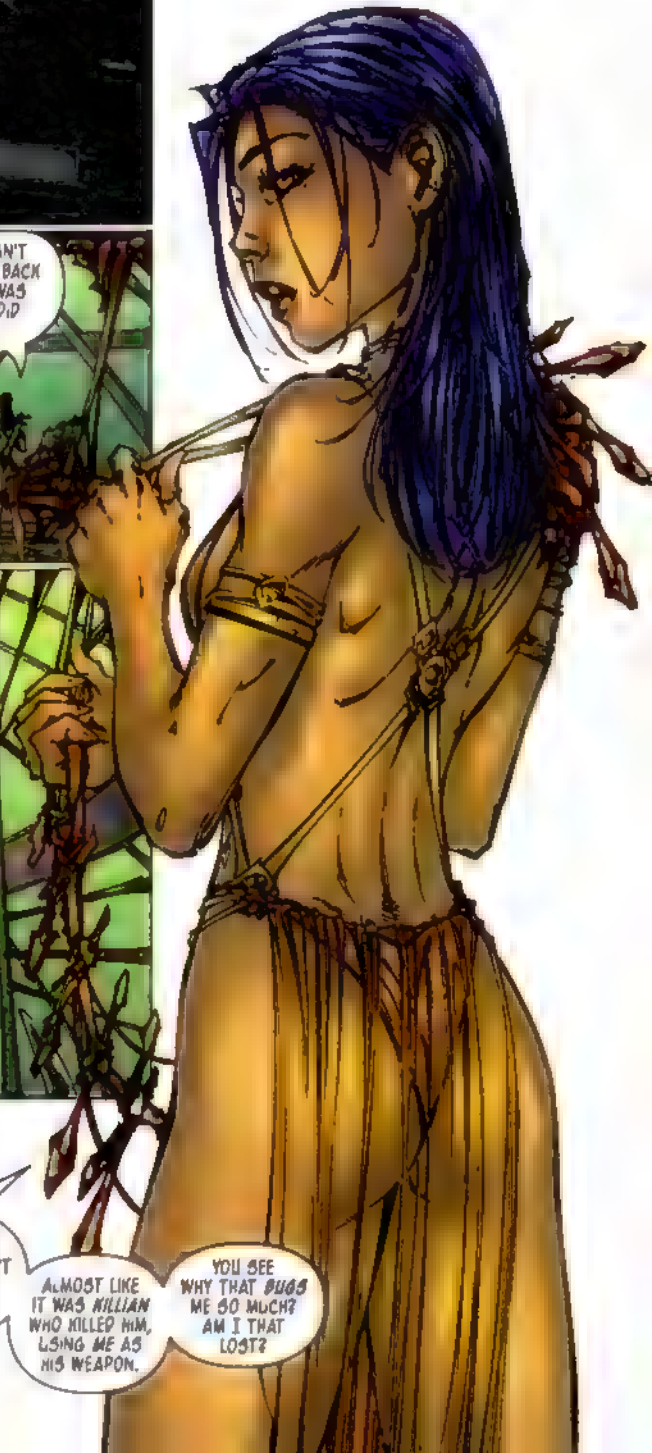
TRUST ME, WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED IS GOING TO HELP YOU... YOU'LL HAVE STRENGTH WHEN YOU NEED IT. YOU'RE SO MUCH MORE THAN KILLIAN'S EVER TOLD YOU. YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.

MAYBE... I DON'T KNOW.

THAT GUY I KILLED HE DIDN'T EVEN MEAN ANYTHING TO ME. I DIDN'T HATE HIM, HE DIDN'T HURT ME... HE WAS JUST THERE, AND KILLIAN'S VOICE WAS IN MY HEAD SAYING "DO IT".

ALMOST LIKE IT WAS KILLIAN WHO KILLED HIM, USING ME AS HIS WEAPON.

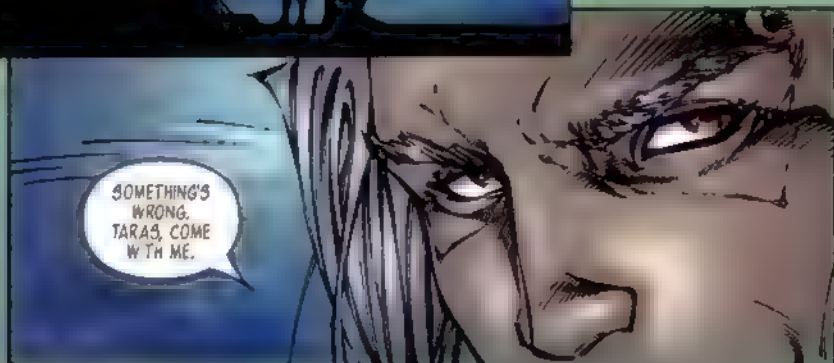
YOU SEE WHY THAT BUGS ME SO MUCH? AM I THAT LOST?





IT'S TIME TO
GET ASPEN TO THE
MACHINE. STATION FIVE,
ESCORT ASPEN TO
THE CATALYST
CHAMBER.

STATION FIVE?
STATION FIVE,
CHECK IN!



SOMETHING'S
WRONG.
TARAS, COME
WITH ME.

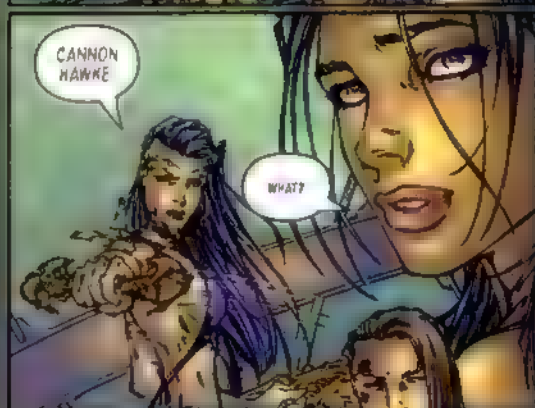


IT'S LIKE I'VE BEEN
RUNNING WITH MY EYES CLOSED
AND KILLIAN'S BEEN HOLDING MY
HAND. HE'S LED ME TO A PLACE I
DON'T WANT TO BE...SOMEWHERE
I CAN'T FIND MY WAY BACK
FROM...BUT I REALLY WANT
TO GET BACK.



ASPEN, YOU'RE
JUST CONFUSED.
STICK WITH IT.
STICK WITH
ME.

I
JUST
NEED...



CANNON
HAWKE

WHAT?

HELLO, ASPEN.
KYLA, IT'S BEEN
A LONG TIME.

AND KILLIAN
TOO. FINALLY, WE'RE
ALL IN THE SAME
PLACE.





SO WE ARE.
BUT I DON'T EXPECT
IT TO LAST.

LET ME
TAKE HIM,
KILLIAN.

NO.



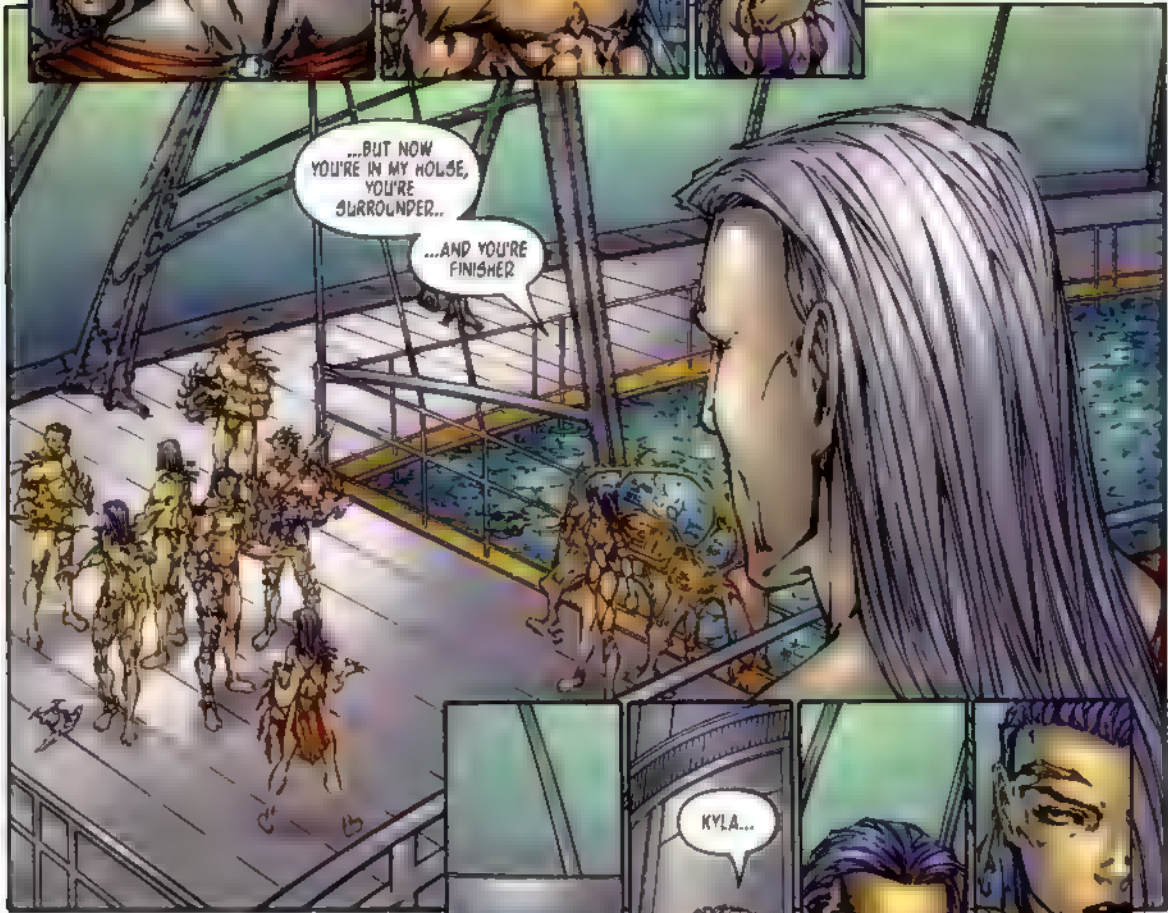
SAY
"THANK YOU,"
TARAS. KILLIAN'S
DOING YOU A
FAVOR.



YOU'RE
LUCKY.

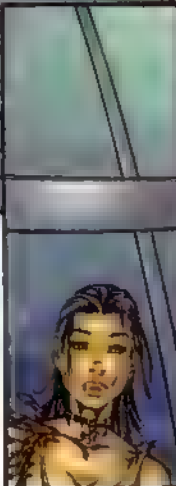
QUIET.

HAWKE,
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU WERE
THINKING COMING
HERE...



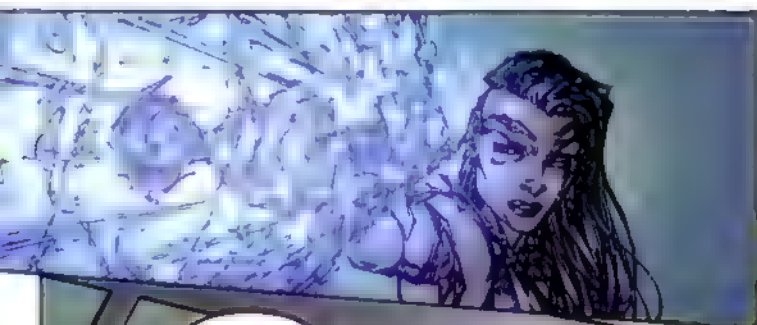
...BUT NOW
YOU'RE IN MY HOUSE,
YOU'RE
SURROUNDED...

...AND YOU'RE
FINISHED

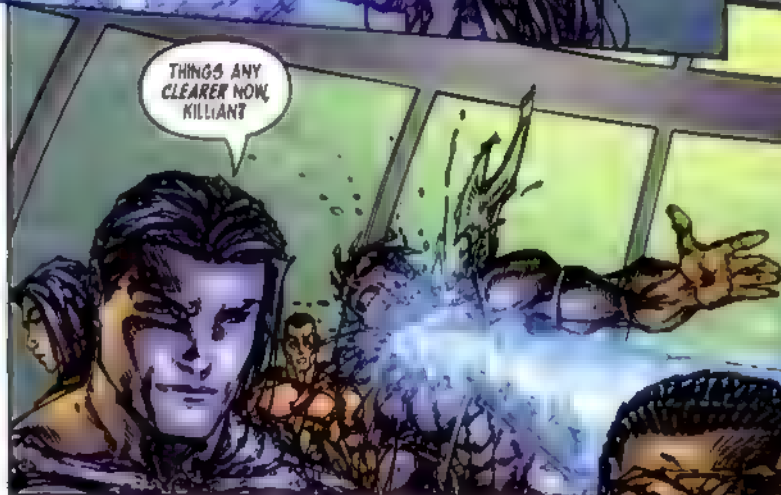


KYLA...

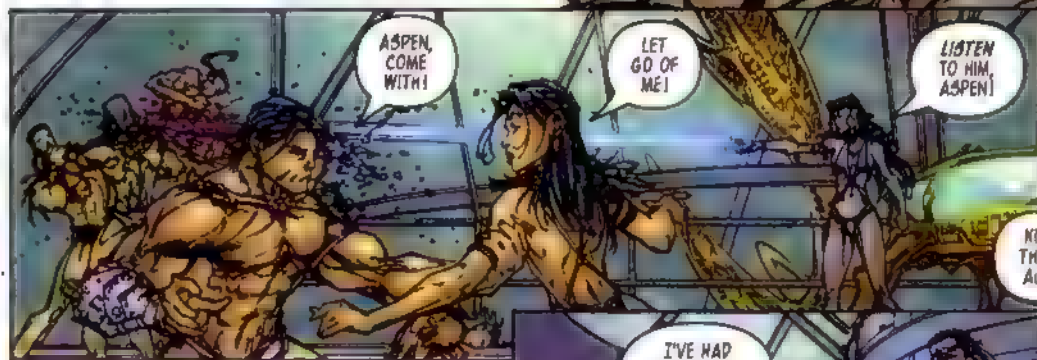
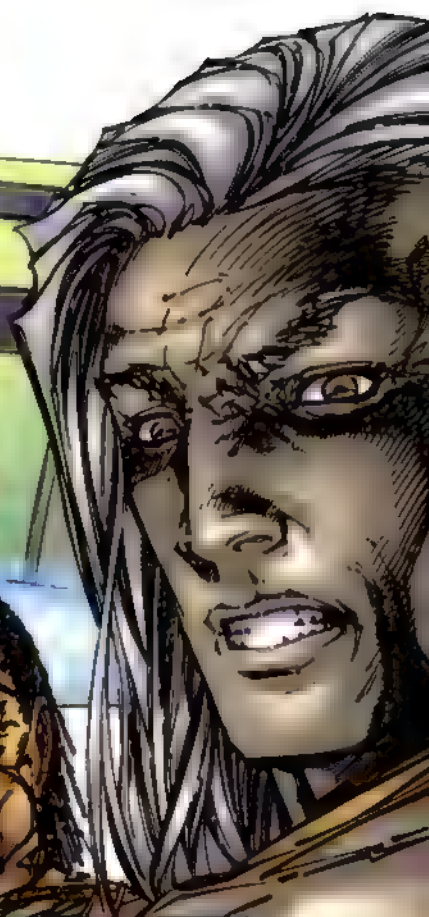




THINGS ANY
CLEARER NOW,
KILLIAN?



I'M GOING
TO KILL THAT
TRAITOROUS
SLUT.

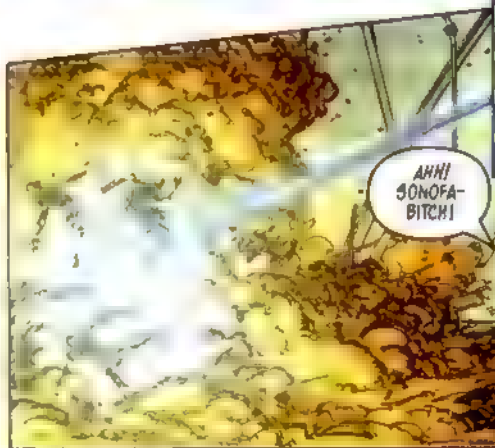


ASPEN,
COME
WITH!

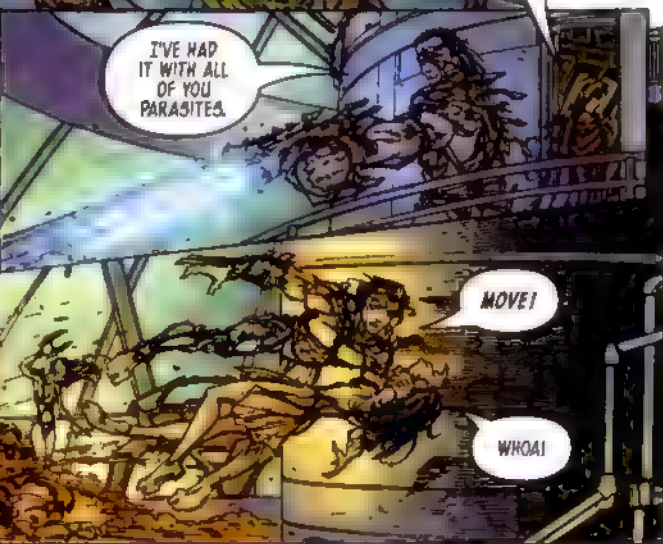
LET
GO OF
ME!

LISTEN
TO HIM,
ASPEN!

KILL
THEM
ALL.



AHH!
SONOFA-
BITCH!



I'VE HAD
IT WITH ALL
OF YOU
PARASITES.

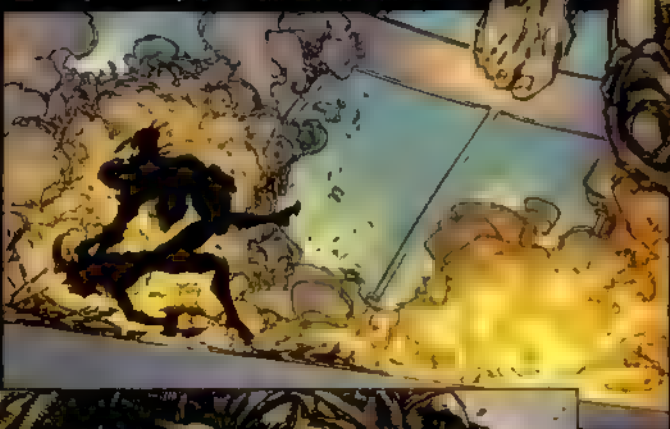
MOVE!

WHOA!

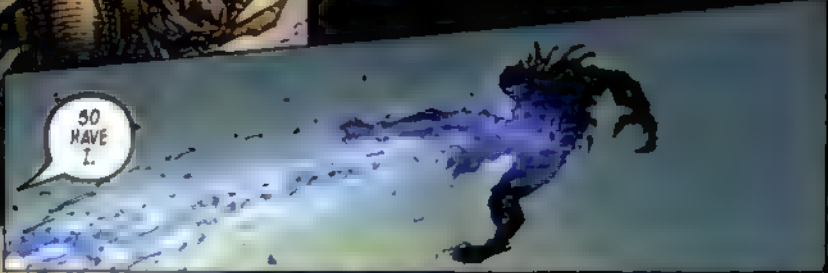


YOU!

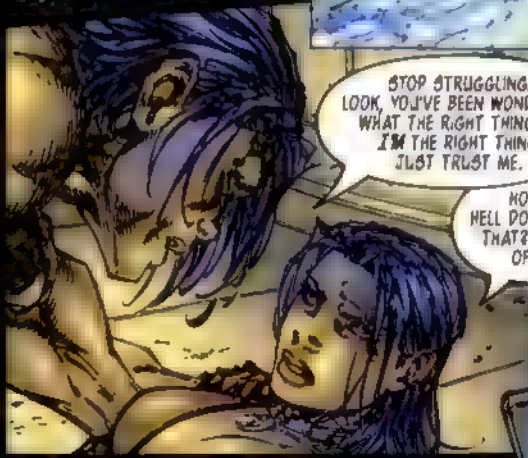
I'VE BEEN
BURNING FOR
AN EXCUSE TO
DO THIS.



YEAH?



SO
HAVE
I.

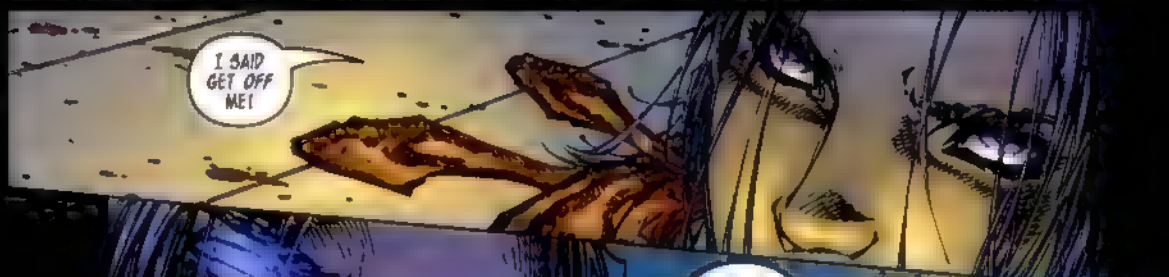


STOP STRUGGLING.
LOOK, YOU'VE BEEN WONDERING
WHAT THE RIGHT THING IS.
I'M THE RIGHT THING.
JUST TRUST ME.

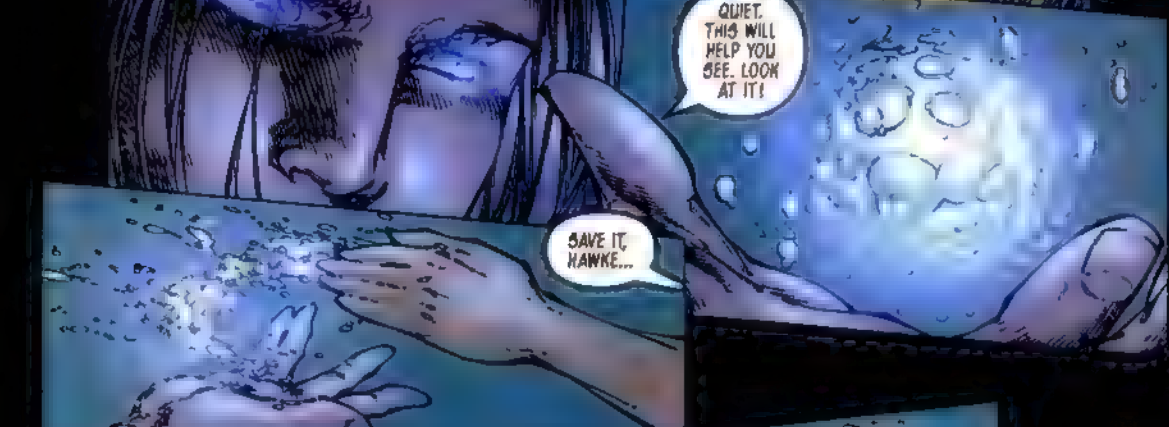
HOW THE
HELL DO YOU KNOW
THAT? AND GET
OFF ME!

CANNON
I'VE GONE
HOMER.

WE'RE GONNA
HAVE TO UPDATE
THAT PING PLAN
YOU'RE PEGUITE.



I SAID
GET OFF
ME!

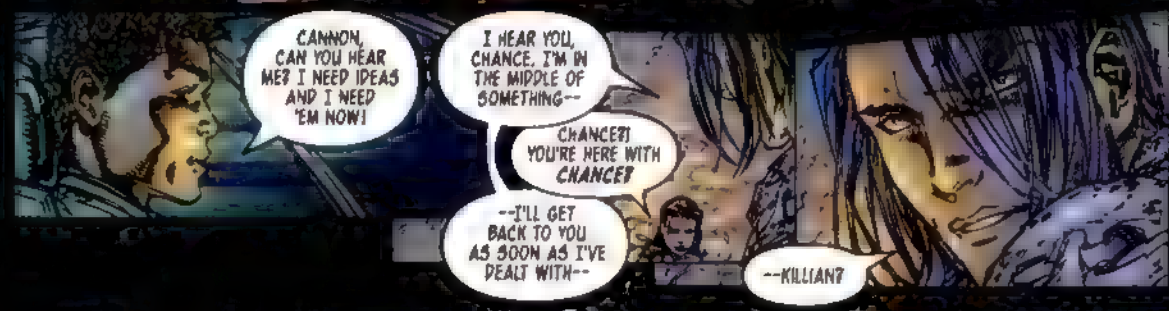


QUIET.
THIS WILL
HELP YOU
SEE. LOOK
AT IT!

SAVE IT,
HAWKE...



...AND
GET THE
OFF
ME!



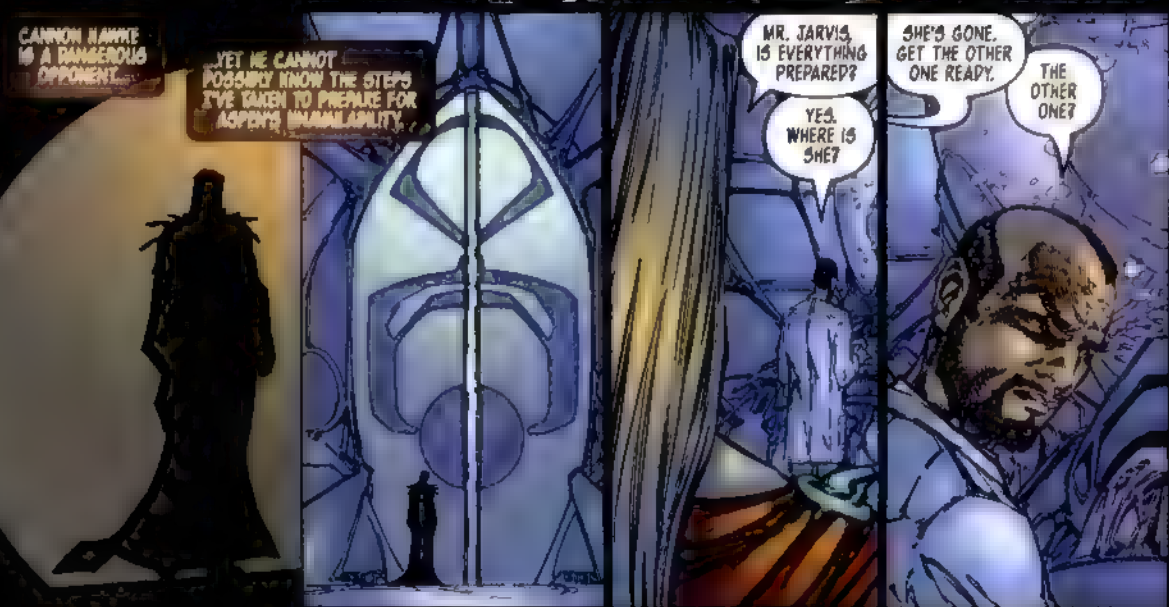
CANNON,
CAN YOU HEAR
ME? I NEED IDEAS
AND I NEED
'EM NOW!

I HEAR YOU,
CHANCE. I'M IN
THE MIDDLE OF
SOMETHING--

CHANCE?
YOU'RE HERE WITH
CHANCE?

--I'LL GET
BACK TO YOU
AS SOON AS I'VE
DEALT WITH--

--KILLIAN?



CANNON HAWKE
IS A DANGEROUS
OPPONENT.

YET HE CANNOT
POSSIBLY KNOW THE STEPS
I'VE TAKEN TO PREPARE FOR
ASPIRANT IMMORTALITY.

MR. JARVIS,
IS EVERYTHING
PREPARED?

YES,
WHERE IS
SHE?

SHE'S GONE.
GET THE OTHER
ONE READY.

THE
OTHER
ONE?

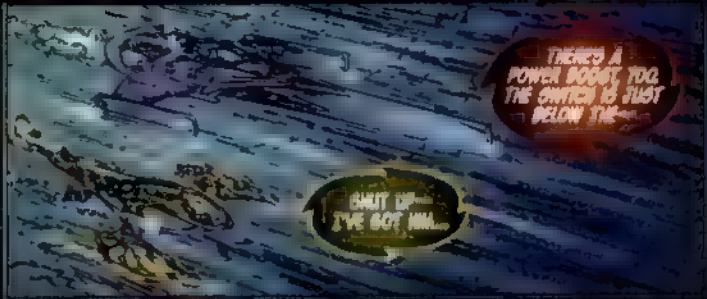


GODDAMN IT, I'M TRYING TO MAKE THIS THING HANDLE LIKE A...

I'M TRYING TO, GODDAMN IT. CANNON, THIS THING HANDLES LIKE A...
...LIKE A BOAT, ACTUALLY.

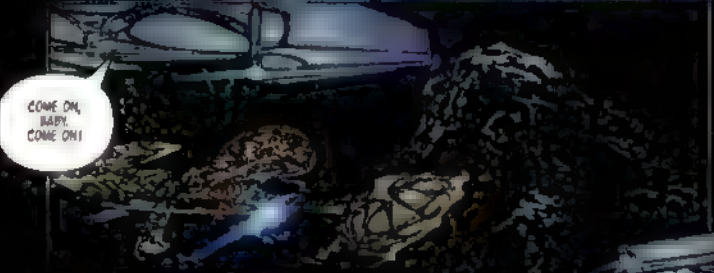
ARE THEY BEHIND YOU? USE THE TRACER MINES. THE RELEASE IS ON THE CONTROL PANEL.

I CAN'T MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OF WHAT'S ON THE PANEL, MAN! I NEED SPEED!

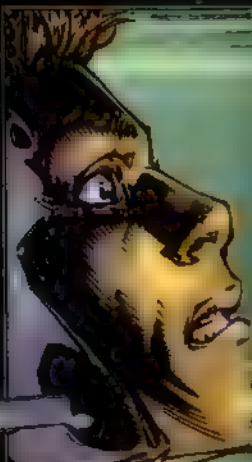


THERE'S A POWER BOOBY TOO. THE SWITCH IS JUST BELOW THE...

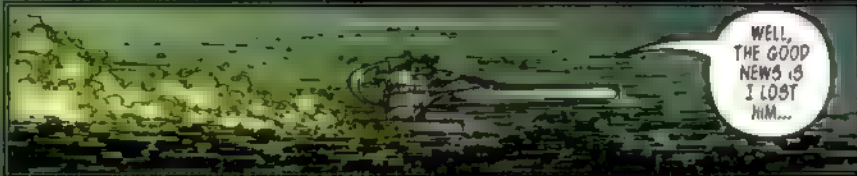
SHUT UP— I'VE GOT HIM...



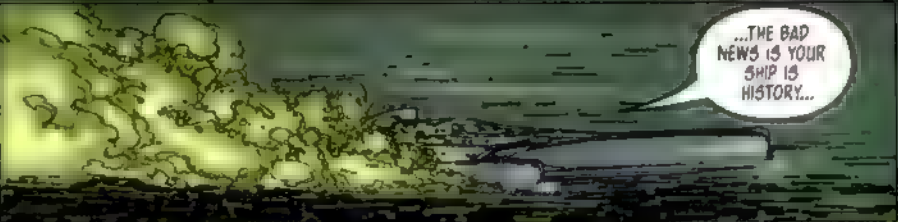
COME ON, BABY. COME ON!



OHMYGOD OHMYGOD OHMYGOD OHMYGOD OHMYGOD OHMYGOD OHMYGOD...



WELL, THE GOOD NEWS IS I LOST HIM...

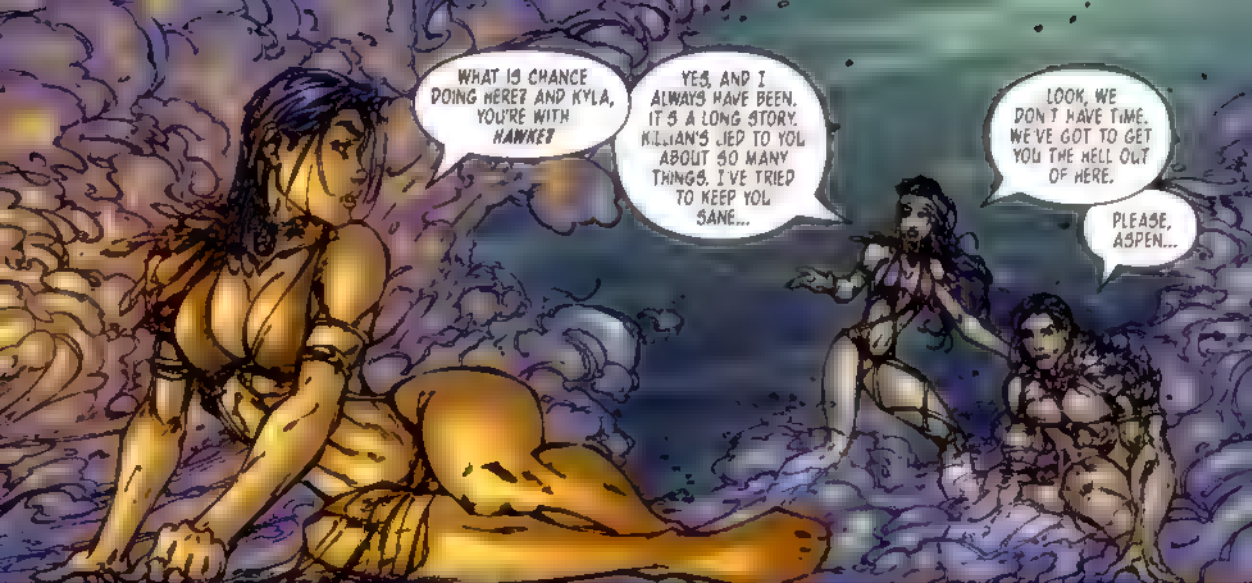


...THE BAD NEWS IS YOUR SHIP IS HISTORY...



...AND I'M GONNA DROWN.

GODDAMN CONVERTIBLES NEVER HANDLE AS WELL AS HARD-TOPS.

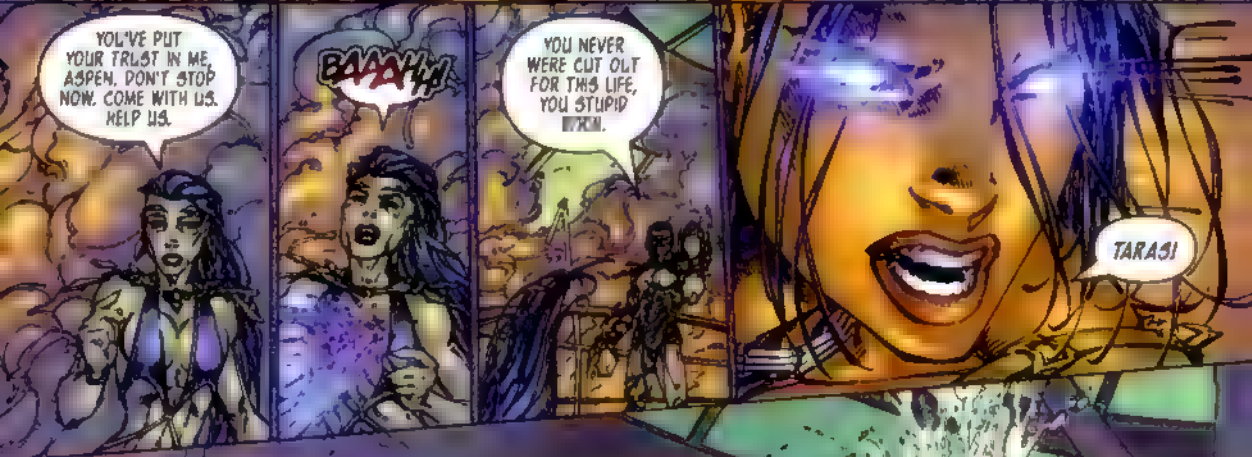


WHAT IS CHANCE
DOING HERE? AND KYLA,
YOU'RE WITH
HAWKEY

YES, AND I
ALWAYS HAVE BEEN.
IT'S A LONG STORY.
KILLIAN'S JED TO YOU
ABOUT SO MANY
THINGS. I'VE TRIED
TO KEEP YOU
SANE...

LOOK, WE
DON'T HAVE TIME.
WE'VE GOT TO GET
YOU THE HELL OUT
OF HERE.

PLEASE,
ASPEN...



YOU'VE PUT
YOUR TRUST IN ME,
ASPEN. DON'T STOP
NOW. COME WITH US.
HELP US.

BAAH!!

YOU NEVER
WERE CUT OUT
FOR THIS LIFE,
YOU STUPID
WOMAN.

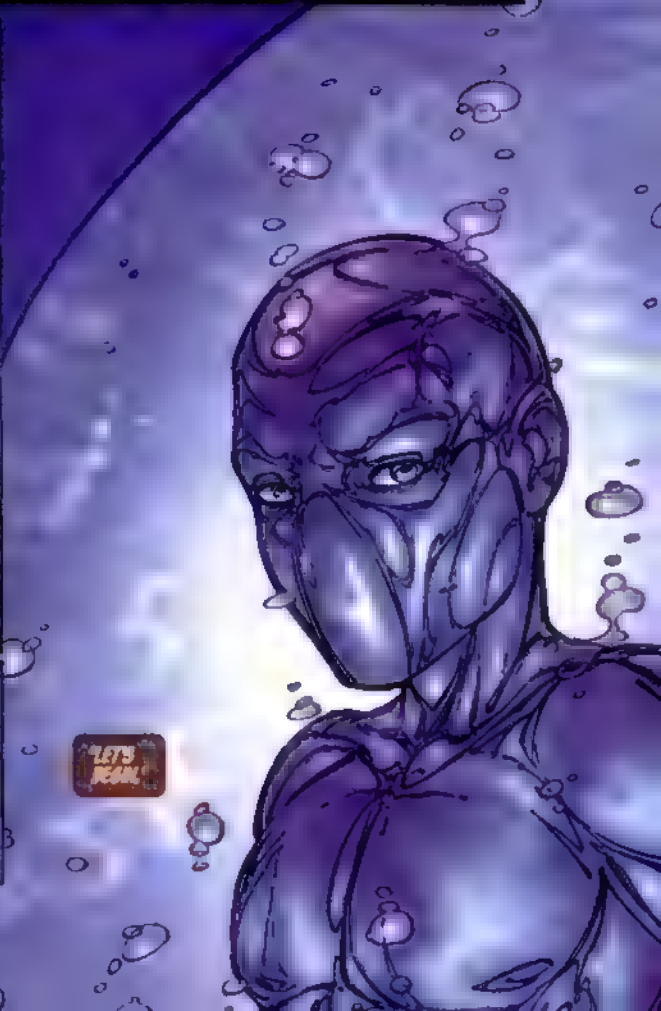
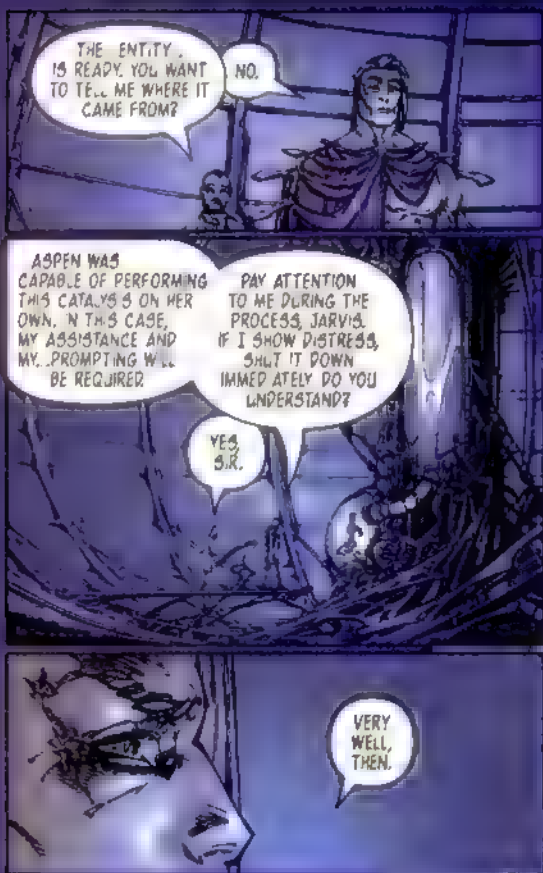
TARAJI



DIE! DIE! DIE!

WHOA.

HAWKEY





SOMEHOW
BETTER WHEN WE
COME AIR BOON OR
I'M GONNA BE
MIGHTY DEAD!

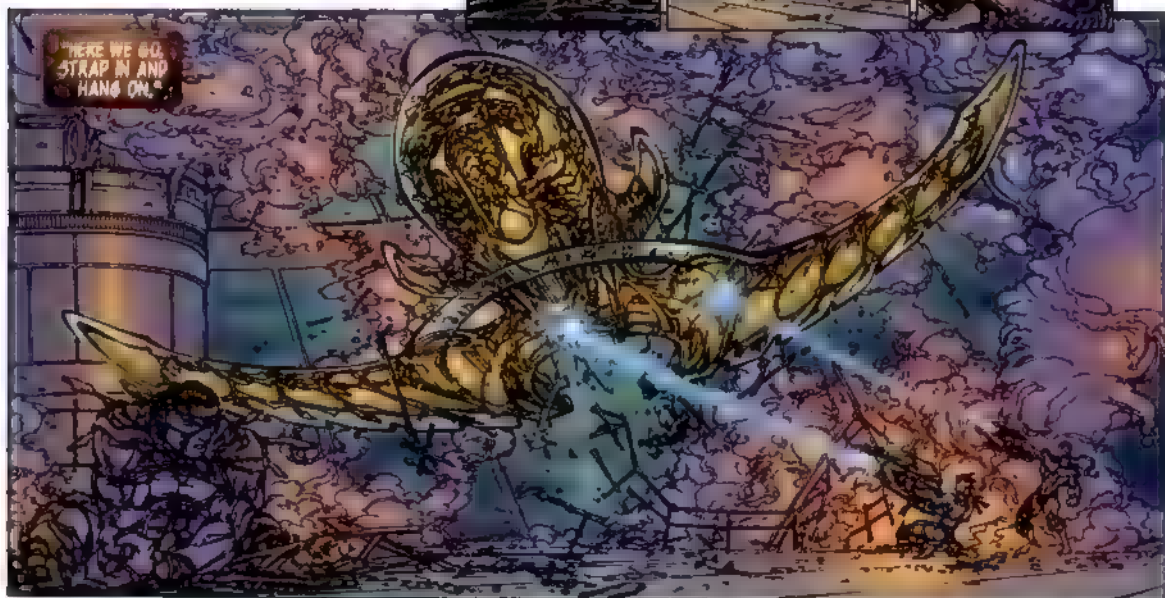
WE'RE
ON OUR WAY,
CHANCE.



IF THIS SHIP
WORKS, HOW COME
THE SCIENTISTS COULD
NEVER GET INTO
IT?



BECAUSE
IT'S PROGRAMMED
TO RESPOND ONLY
TO MY TOUCH.



"HERE WE GO,
STRAP IN AND
HANG ON."



I'VE GOT
YOUR POSITION, CH—
WHOA! MY SCOPE JUST
WENT HAYWIRE!
HANG ON...



HANGING...

DROWNING
MORE LIKE.



WELL,
I SEE YOU
AGAIN."



LET
CHANCE

ON TIME
TO GO
ALREADY?



SOMEHOW
BETTER WHEN WE
COME AT GOON OR
I'M GONNA BE
MIGHTY DEAD!

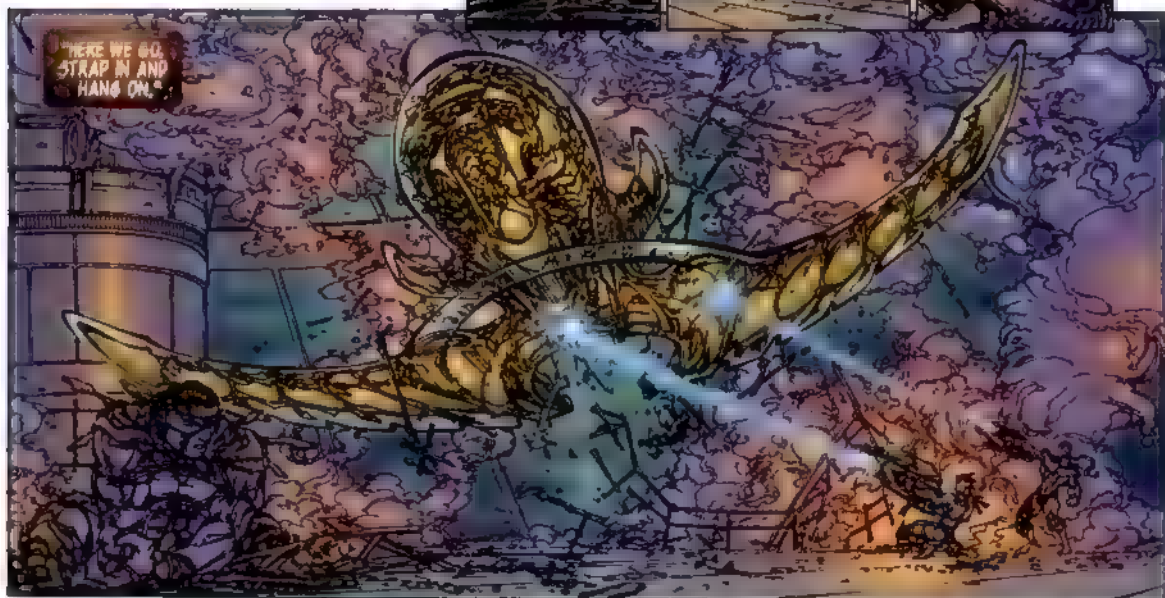
WE'RE
ON OUR WAY,
CHANCE.



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YOUR POSITION, CH—
WHOA! MY SCOPE JUST
WENT HAYWIRE!
HANG ON...

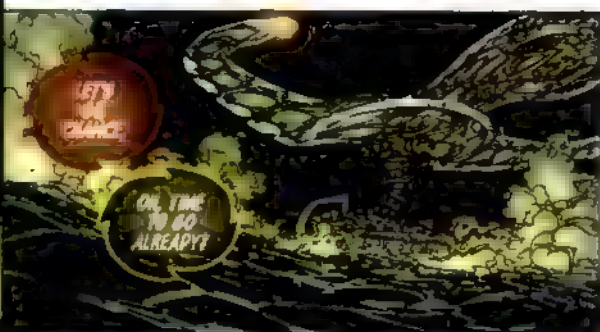


HANGING...

DROWNING
MORE LIKE.

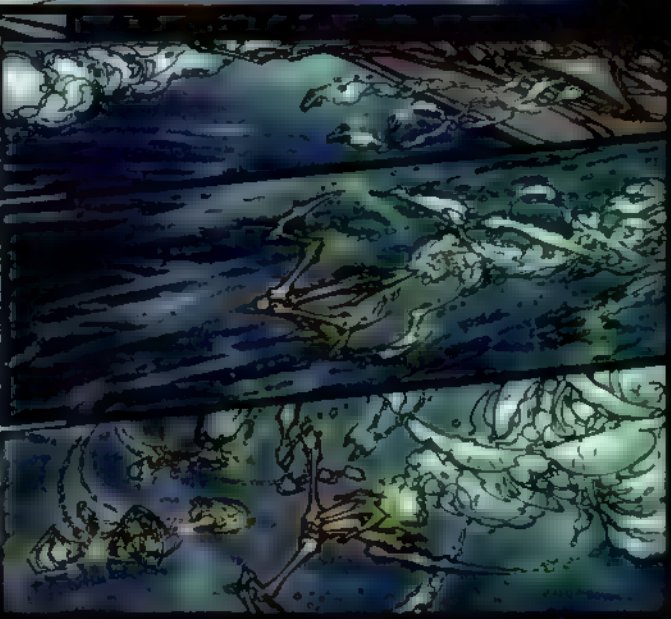
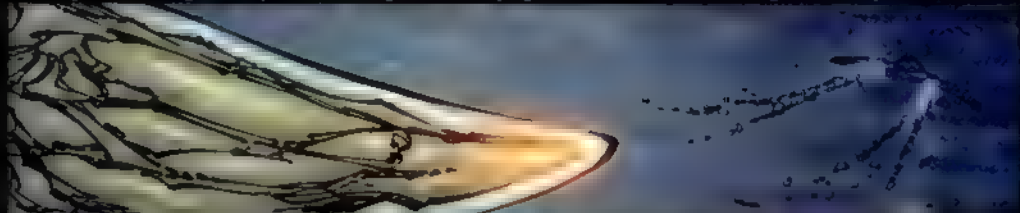
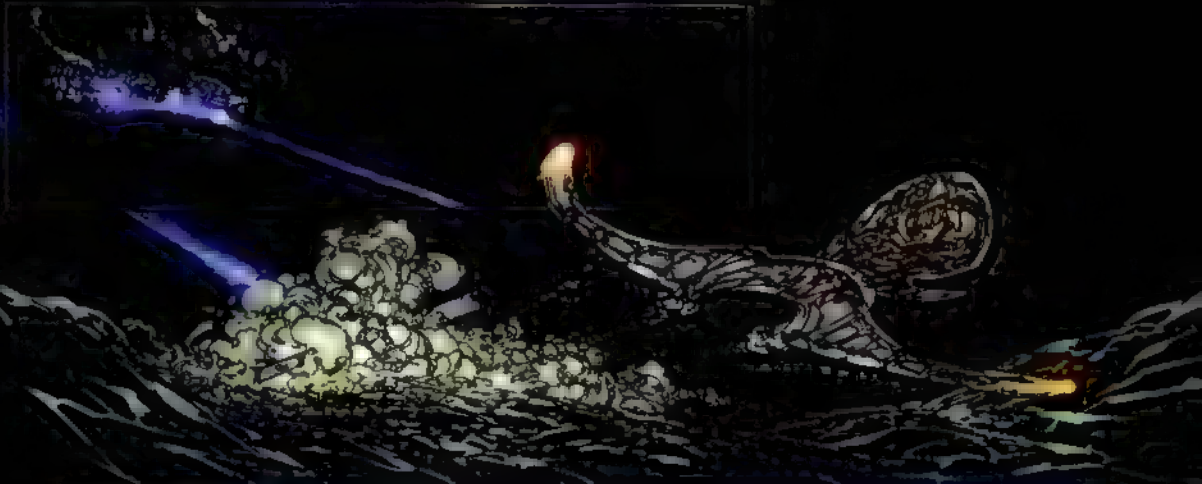
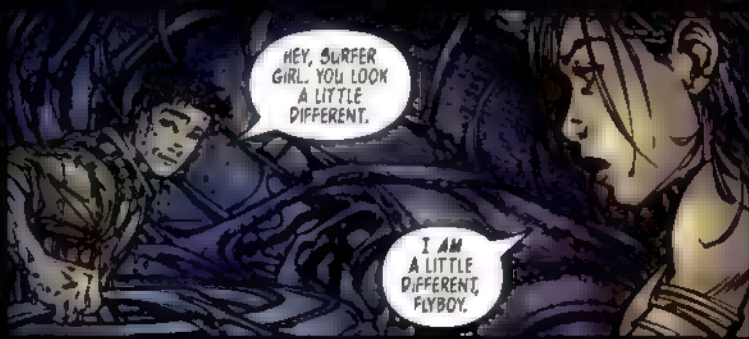


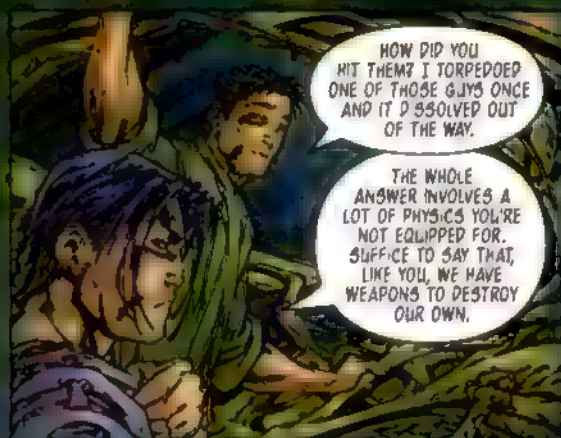
WELL,
I SEE YOU
AGAIN."



SP
DANCE

ON TIME
TO GO
ALREADY?





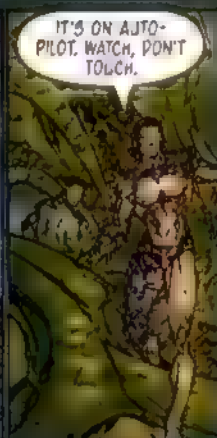
HOW DID YOU
HIT THEM? I TORPEDOED
ONE OF THOSE GUYS ONCE
AND IT DISSOLVED OUT
OF THE WAY.

THE WHOLE
ANSWER INVOLVES A
LOT OF PHYSICS YOU'RE
NOT EQUIPPED FOR.
SUFFICE TO SAY THAT,
LIKE YOU, WE HAVE
WEAPONS TO DESTROY
OUR OWN.



WATCH
THE
CONTROLS.

REMEMBER
THE LAST TIME
YOU GAVE ME
THE STICK?



IT'S ON AUTO-
PILOT. WATCH, DON'T
TOUCH.

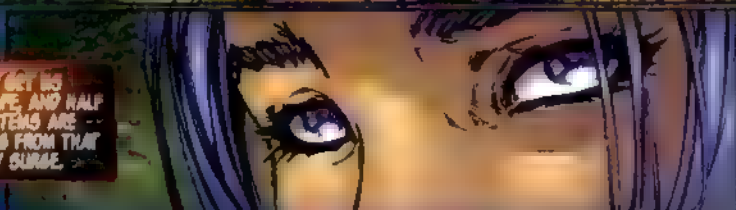


HOW'S SHE
DOING?

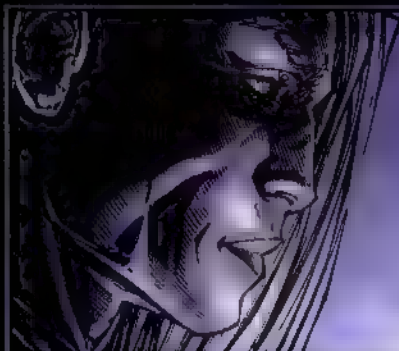
SHE'S DYING.
CANNON, AND I DON'T
KNOW WHAT TO DO
ABOUT IT.

HOLD HER.
TALK TO HER.
IT'S ALL YOU
CAN DO.

"I'VE GOT TO GET US
SOMEWHERE SAFE, AND HALF
THE SHIP'S SYSTEMS ARE
STILL SPINNING FROM THAT
ENERGY SURGE."



"I DON'T KNOW HOW
HE DID IT, ACPEN, BUT
WILLIAM PERFORMED THE THIRD
STAGE WITHOUT YOU."



THE FINAL DETAILS
HAVE BEEN SEEN TO.
THE SMALLEST TASK
REMAINS.

A MOMENT--A MOMENT ONLY--
STANDS BETWEEN NOW AND A FOREVER
CHANGED EXISTENCE. THE MOMENT
STANDS NAKED UNMARKED AND
UNMARKED NO TEXT WILL RECORD IT,
NO OBSERVER COMMENT NO WRITER CAN
REVISE ITS SIGNIFICANCE. THE EVENTS
THAT FOLLOW WILL BE OBSERVED AND
DISCUSSED AND ESSAYED AD NAUSEAM.
YET IT IS IN THIS MOMENT THAT
THE CHANGES BECOME INEVITABLE.

I HAVE ENGINEERED
THIS TOOL OF CHANGE.
YET EVEN I CAN ENVISION
ONLY SOME OF WHAT IT
WILL ACCOMPLISH.

DESTRUCTION, YEA.
CATASTROPHIC, POSSIBLY.

CHACST

CERTAINLY.

THESE WOUNDS ARE
THE OBVIOUS, MERE ACTIONS
WITHOUT REAL SIGNIFICANCE.
THEY WILL HEAL, ABSORBED
AND LINDONE BY THE LIVING
ENTITY THAT IS
THE PLANET.

HOWEVER...

...KNOWLEDGE, FACTS
AND REVELATIONS, UNLIKE
ACTIONS, CANNOT BE UNDONE.
THEY CANNOT BE UNLEARNED
OR IGNORED THEY WILL LIVE
FOREVER IN THE MINDS OF
ENLIGHTENED BEINGS.

THE
SMALLEST
TASK...

THE MOMENT
ITSELF IS NOTHING.
ITS RESULTS WILL
LAST FOREVER.

IT'S DONE.
NO ONE--MYSELF INCLUDED--
CAN REVERSE IT. NOW PREDICT
IT'S PRECISE OUTCOME.
LIKELIHOODS SPREAD BEFORE
ME, VAST LIKE THE LIQUID
OF THE PACIFIC ITSELF.

A WAR
AMONGST
THE ANCIENTS...

A HUMAN
SPECIES KNEELING
AHEAD...

AN
ENLIGHTENMENT
FOR ALL TIME...





AN OCEAN
WORLD
ENVIGORATED.

BE
CONTINUED...

TOP GUN
Image
8 \$2.50
SEPT 1999
CAN

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM

TURNER
O'NEIL
WEEMS
SMITH



MICHAEL
TURNER
JO SMITH
1999

FATHOM *an imprint of* **Top Cow**



THERE ARE TWO WORLDS. One above, one below.

MICHAEL TURNER
BILL O'NEIL
MICHAEL TURNER
JOE WEEMS
JONATHAN SIBAL
JASON GORDER
JONATHAN D. SMITH
PETER STEIGERWALD
DENNIS HEISLER
MATT HAWKINS
RENAE GEERLINGS
MARCO "MADMAN" GALLI
CESAR & MONICA RODRIGUEZ
NICK CHUN, ALVIN COATS, RAUL ARROYO
ANNIE SKILES, ROBIN SPEHAR

the one we know,

and the one below.

MICHAEL TURNER
JONATHAN D. SMITH

Special thanks to

Monica Smith
Victoria Sinclair-Smith
Jonathan D. Smith
Peter Steigerwald
Renae Geerlings
David Wohl
Matt Hawkin
Sonia Im
Bill O'Neil
Joe Weems
Jonathan Sibal
Jason Gorder
Marco Galli
Caesar Rodriguez
Monica Rodriguez
Dennis Heisler
Robin Spehar
Nick Chun
Alvin Coats
Annie Skiles
Mike Salter

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BRAD FORKHOVEN : co-president
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MATT HAWKINS : vice president of publishing
SONIA IM : senior editor / production director
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MATT STEIGERWALD : director of sales and marketing
TIM BERNANDEZ : director of development
AARON BICHSEL : director of business affairs
BRIAN SELZER : director of Top Cow Interactive
PETER STEIGERWALD : spends all her time on the phone
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TOP COW



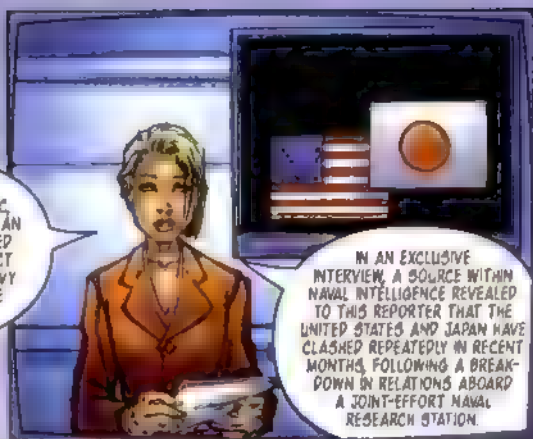
FOR
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*S*AN DIEGO
CALIFORNIA

THIS IS AN
EYEWITNESS NEWS
SPECIAL REPORT.
I'M TYLER
KINCAID

THE MYSTERIOUS BLUE LIGHT
THAT HOVERS ABOVE THE PACIFIC,
FIRST REPORTED BY THE STATION AN
HOUR AGO, HAS NOW BEEN LINKED
TO A GROWING MILITARY CONFLICT
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES NAVY
AND WHAT'S BEING CALLED THE
JAPANESE SECRET DEFENSE.



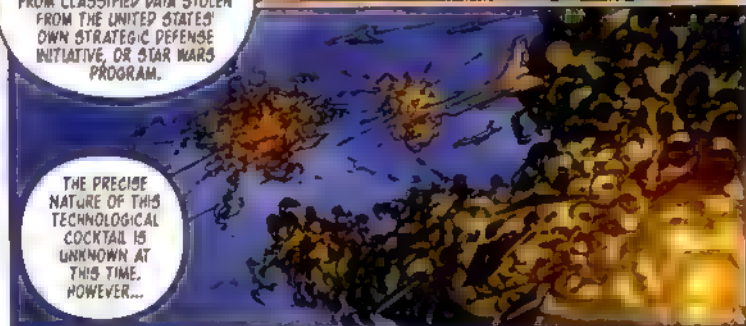
IN AN EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW, A SOURCE WITHIN
NAVAL INTELLIGENCE REVEALED
TO THIS REPORTER THAT THE
UNITED STATES AND JAPAN HAVE
CLASHED REPEATEDLY IN RECENT
MONTHS, FOLLOWING A BREAK-
DOWN IN RELATIONS ABOARD
A JOINT-EFFORT NAVAL
RESEARCH STATION.



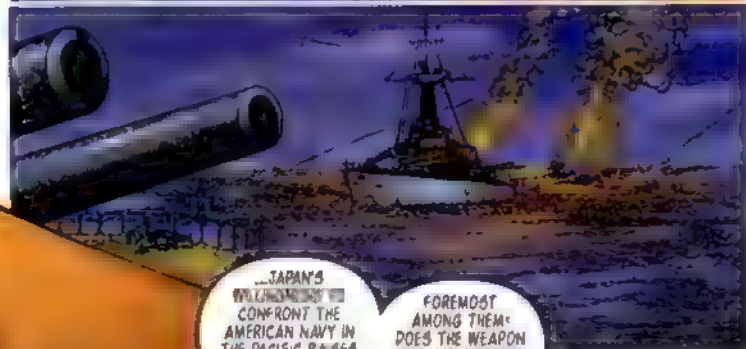
SPEAKING ON
CONDITION OF ANONYMITY,
THE SOURCE WARNED THAT
THE BLUE LIGHT IS PART OF
AN EXPERIMENTAL JAPANESE
WEAPON OF UNKNOWN
CAPABILITY.



INTELLIGENCE
INDICATES THAT THE
WEAPON INCORPORATES
TECHNOLOGY FROM BOTH THE
NAVAL RESEARCH STATION AND
FROM CLASSIFIED DATA STOLEN
FROM THE UNITED STATES
OWN STRATEGIC DEFENSE
INITIATIVE, OR STAR WARS
PROGRAM.



THE PRECISE
NATURE OF THIS
TECHNOLOGICAL
COCKTAIL IS
UNKNOWN AT
THIS TIME,
HOWEVER...



...JAPAN'S
WILLINGNESS TO
CONFRONT THE
AMERICAN NAVY IN
THE PACIFIC RAISES
SOME HARROWING
QUESTIONS.

FOREMOST
AMONG THEM:
DOES THE WEAPON
GIVE THE JAPANESE
INSTANT MILITARY
SUPERIORITY?

THE SUDDEN EMERGENCE OF A JAPANESE MILITARY IS ITSELF A SURPRISE, SINCE THEIR SURRENDER AT THE CLOSE OF WORLD WAR TWO, THE JAPANESE ARE PROMISED VIA TREATY FROM KEEPING A STANDING MILITARY--

--BUT THE NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SOURCE SAID THAT JAPAN HAS MAINTAINED A SECRET DEFENSE OPERATION FOR SOME TIME, POSSIBLY SEVERAL DECADES.

ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, THE JAPANESE SECRET DEFENSE HAS NEVER BEEN CONSIDERED A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE AMERICAN MILITARY.

BUT THE SHEER SIZE OF THE BLUE LIGHT, WHICH IS VISIBLE FROM MOST PACIFIC NATIONS, INDICATES A POTENTIAL FOR DESTRUCTION ON A NEAR-GLOBAL SCALE...

...AND WE MUST WONDER IF THE BALANCE OF POWER HAS SHIFTED IN FAVOR OF JAPAN.

NO WORD IS FORTHCOMING FROM ANY JAPANESE SPOKESPERSON. JAPAN'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT, AND UNCONFIRMED REPORTS INDICATE THAT HE MAY HAVE RETURNED TO HIS HOME COUNTRY.

MEANWHILE, THE ESCALATING CONFLICT IN THE PACIFIC HAS LED THE UNITED STATES TO PLACE ITS WORLDWIDE MILITARY IN A HIGH STATE OF READINESS KNOWN AS DEFCON THREE.

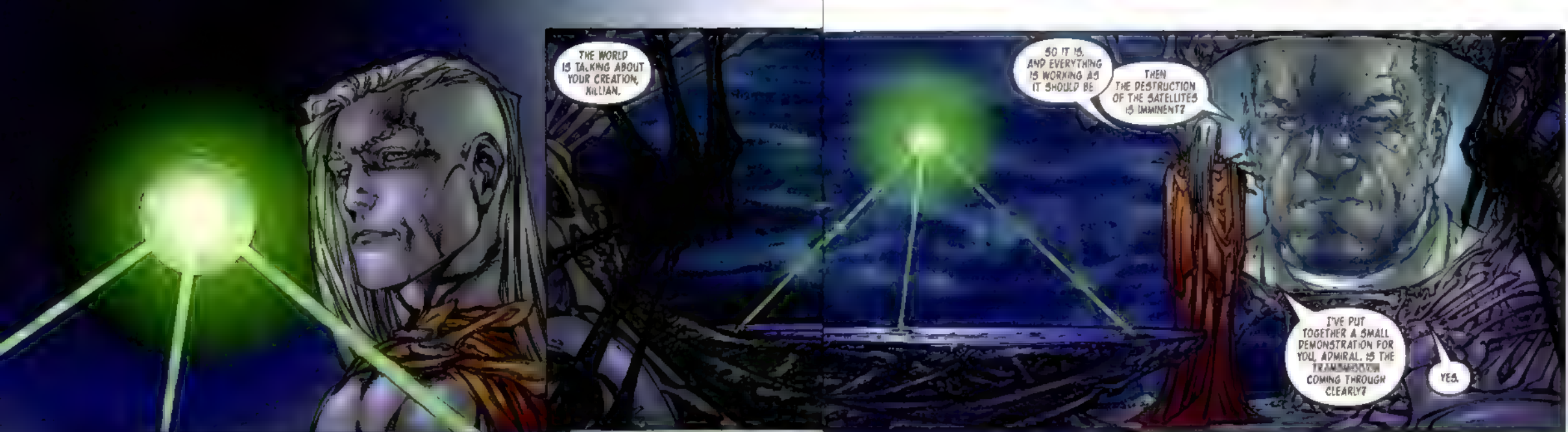
AMONG THE MANY POSSIBILITIES RAISED IS ONE CERTAINITY. SHOULD THE LONG-STANDING ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN TRULY BE BROKEN, THE MAP OF THE PACIFIC WILL BE REDRAWN ALONG NEW ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL LINES.



IN THE MEAN TIME
THE LIGHT FROM THE SUN
CONTINUES TO ILLUMINATE A BLUE GUN
WAITING FOR THE SUN TO RISE AGAIN.

THE LIGHT FROM THE SUN
CONTINUES TO ILLUMINATE A BLUE GUN
WAITING FOR THE SUN TO RISE AGAIN.





THE WORLD IS TALKING ABOUT YOUR CREATION, KILLIAN.

SO IT IS, AND EVERYTHING IS WORKING AS IT SHOULD BE.

THEN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SATELLITES IS IMMINENT?

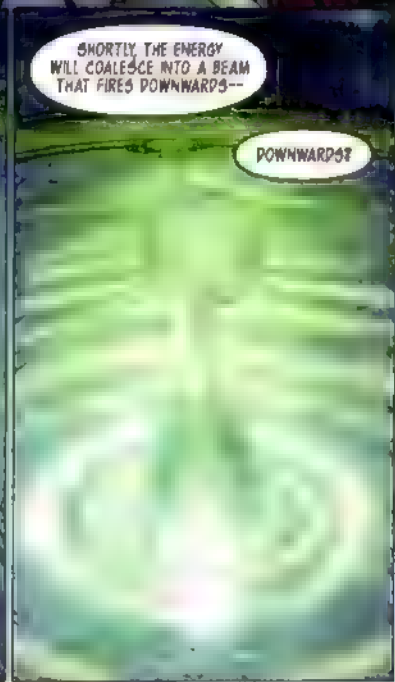
I'VE PUT TOGETHER A SMALL DEMONSTRATION FOR YOU, ADMIRAL. IS THE TRANSMISSION COMING THROUGH CLEARLY?

YES.



GOOD YOU MIGHT THINK OF THE BLUE SUN-- I RATHER FANCY THE NAME YOUR MOP HAS GIVEN IT--YOU MIGHT THINK OF IT AS THE RESERVOIR.

THE THREE BEAMS FROM THE PLANET'S SURFACE ARE FEEDING ENERGY INTO THE BLUE SUN, WHERE IT IS STORED UNTIL IT REACHES THE PROPER THRESHOLD.



SHORTLY, THE ENERGY WILL COALESCE INTO A BEAM THAT FIRES DOWNWARDS--

DOWNWARDS?



YES, DOWNWARDS. IT WILL THEN EXPAND, CLEARING THE WATER FROM A SECTION OF THE OCEAN FLOOR.

WHAT'S THERE ON THE OCEAN FLOOR?



THAT INFORMATION HAS NO SIGNIFICANCE TO YOU, ADMIRAL.



ONCE THE FLOOR IS DRY, THE SATELLITES YOU WANT DESTROYED WILL IGNITE, FEEDING STILL MORE ENERGY INTO THE CORE.



THEN, ONCE A SECOND THRESHOLD IS REACHED, ANOTHER ENERGY PULSED BEAM WILL FIRE--



DOWNWARD AGAIN. I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS THE BLUE SUN DRAINING THE SATELLITE'S ENERGY? WILL THEY BE DESTROYED?



TRULY YOU HAVE THE BRAINS OF A SPONGE, ADMIRAL. YOU ABSORB WHAT I TELL YOU AND ACCEPT IT WITHOUT HESITATION.



WHY WOULD I DESTROY MY OWN SATELLITES?

YOUR OWN.



YOU'LL FIND I'M A DANGEROUS PERSON, KILLIAN.

MORE SO NOW THAN BEFORE? I LOOK FORWARD TO THE AMUSEMENT, KILLIAN OUT.

CANNON,
YOU NEED
TO GET IN
HERE.

ONE
SECOND...

TAKE IT
EASY, KYLA.
REST.

NO. I HAVE
TOO MUCH TO TELL
YOU...

THE WORLD...
OUR WORLD... IS NOT
THE WAY WILLIAM
SAID...

IT'S MORE COMPLEX.
MORE BEAUTIFUL. IT'S A WAY
OF LIFE WORTH FIGHTING
FOR.

...BUT WILLIAM...

HE'S GETTING...
STRONGER WITH THE PEOPLE
HE PREACHES POWER AND
THEY'RE LURED BY HIS
PROMISES...

HE'S GOING
TO DESTROY ALL THAT
REALITY IF YOU AND
CANNON CAN'T...
STOP HIM.

CANNON CAN'T
DO IT BY HIMSELF.
HE NEEDS YOUR HELP.
YOU CAN. RAISE
PEOPLE, BRING THEM
BACK...

ALL OF YOUR
ABILITY WHICH...
WILLIAM... SAYS TO DESTROY
CAN BE USED TO CREATE...
IF YOU TRUST CANNON
TO TEACH YOU
HOW...

KYLA...

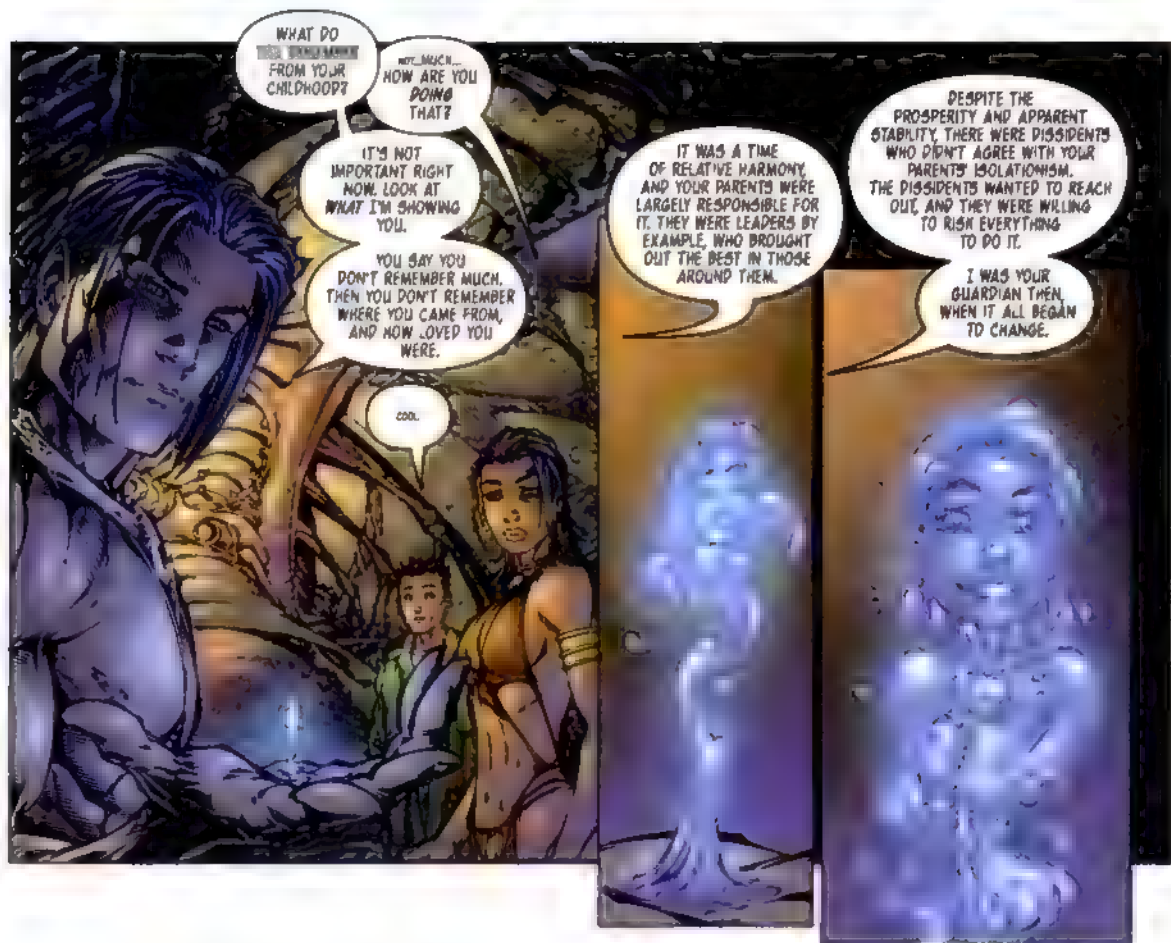
CANNON
YOU ARE AN ASPEN
AS A... IT'S GIRL
I KNOW THE ADULT
ONE'S...

EVERYTHING
YOU SAY SHE'D
BE... DON'T EVER
TAKE HER FOR
GRANTED...

ASPEN...

I WISH
I COULD STILL
BE ABLE TO
SEE WHAT
YOU DO...

WISH YOU
WAS A SHARD TO
BE THE ONLY
ONE...



"YOU WERE ELEVEN,
YOUR BROTHER WAS THIRTEEN.
DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR
MOTHER?"

"NO, I DON'T
FROM SO
EARLY."



"THE TWO OF YOU
WERE SWIMMING OUTSIDE
YOUR HUNTER'S PLACE WHEN
THE ATTACK BEGAN."



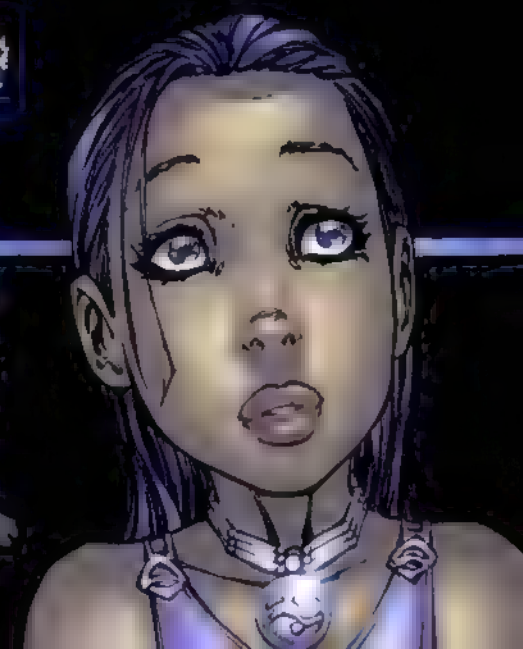
"I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG
THEY'D BEEN SHORE BY THE TIME
I GOT THERE, BUT IT WAS LONG
ENOUGH FOR THE TWO OF YOU TO SUFFER
SERIOUS DAMAGE. YOUR BROTHER WAS DEAD."

"I WAS COMING TO GET
YOU TWO, TO STOP YOU FROM
GOING IN AND SEEING YOUR
MOTHER AND FATHER, WHEN
I WAS SHOT. YOU DON'T
REMEMBER ANY OF THIS?"

"NO, ALTHOUGH THERE'S
SOMETHING AN IMPRESSION
YOU MIGHT CALL IT... A SENSE
OF FEAR, BUT NO ACTUAL
MEMORY."



"MOM, WELL, I WAS SHOT
DOWN, AND I SAW THEN WHO
HAD STARTED THE ATTACK."



"IT WAS WILLIAM, WHO AT THAT TIME WAS THE DISSENTING LEADER OF THE ENLIGHTENED DISSENTS. HE'D BEEN IMPRISONED FOR ACTS OF MINOR VIOLENCE—NOT MUCH MORE THAN BEING A REALITY."

"—BUT HE'D ESCAPED SOME MONTHS EARLIER AND DISAPPEARED. WE NEVER PRIORITIZED FINDING HIM BECAUSE WE THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD THE THREAT HE REPRESENTED."

"DURING HIS DISAPPEARANCE HE RECRUITED A NUMBER OF MALCONTENTED TO JOIN HIS CRUSADE, AND HE LED THEM INTO THEIR FIRST MILITARY ACTION—"

"—THE KIDNAPPING OF YOU AND YOUR BROTHER AND THE ASSASSINATION OF THEIR FATHERS."

"I WAS THE ONLY APOLE HEARDY, AND I WAS DOWN. I COULDN'T STOP HIM. IT'S GIVEN HIM UP FOR GONE..."

"WHEN YOU TAPPED INTO YOUR LATENT POWER, MOST WPS DON'T START UNTIL PUBERTY, AND YOU WERE STILL A COUPLE OF YEARS YOUNGER THAN THAT, BUT I THINK THE STRESS OF THE SITUATION FORCED IT AWAY OF YOU."

"YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER."

"WELL, YOU AND YOUR BROTHER TOOK OFF IN THE FAMILY CAR, SO TO SPEAK, THE DISSENTS CHASED YOU IN A COUPLE OF SCORPIONS. I WAS ABLE TO GET TO MY GUN AND COME AFTER YOU."

"IT WAS RIGHT AFTER THAT THAT YOU AND YOUR BROTHER DISAPPEARED ALONG WITH THE ANACAPSE."

"WHERE WERE WE ALL THE TIME THE SHIP WAS MISSING?"

"IT WAS AFTER YOU COULD TELL ME. AT FIRST WE THOUGHT WILLIAM HAD SUCCEEDED IN KIDNAPPING YOU, BUT WHEN THE ANACAPSE REAPPEARED WE WERE AWAY."

"WELL, NO ONE'S MANAGED TO EXPLAIN IT YET, AND YOUR BROTHER'S NEVER BEEN FOUND."



TESTE
MOTAL

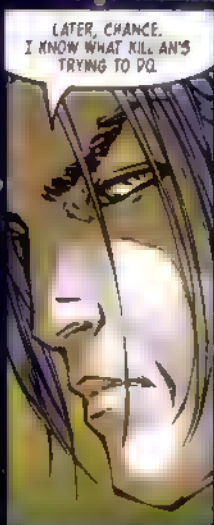
THAT MEANS
I DON'T HAVE
A CHOICE

SO
YOU'RE
TELLING
ME...

...AND
YOU SAY THAT
ASPEN IS...

...AND THERE'S
A WHOLE RACE
OF...

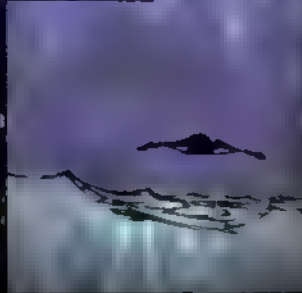
...FISH
PEOPLES

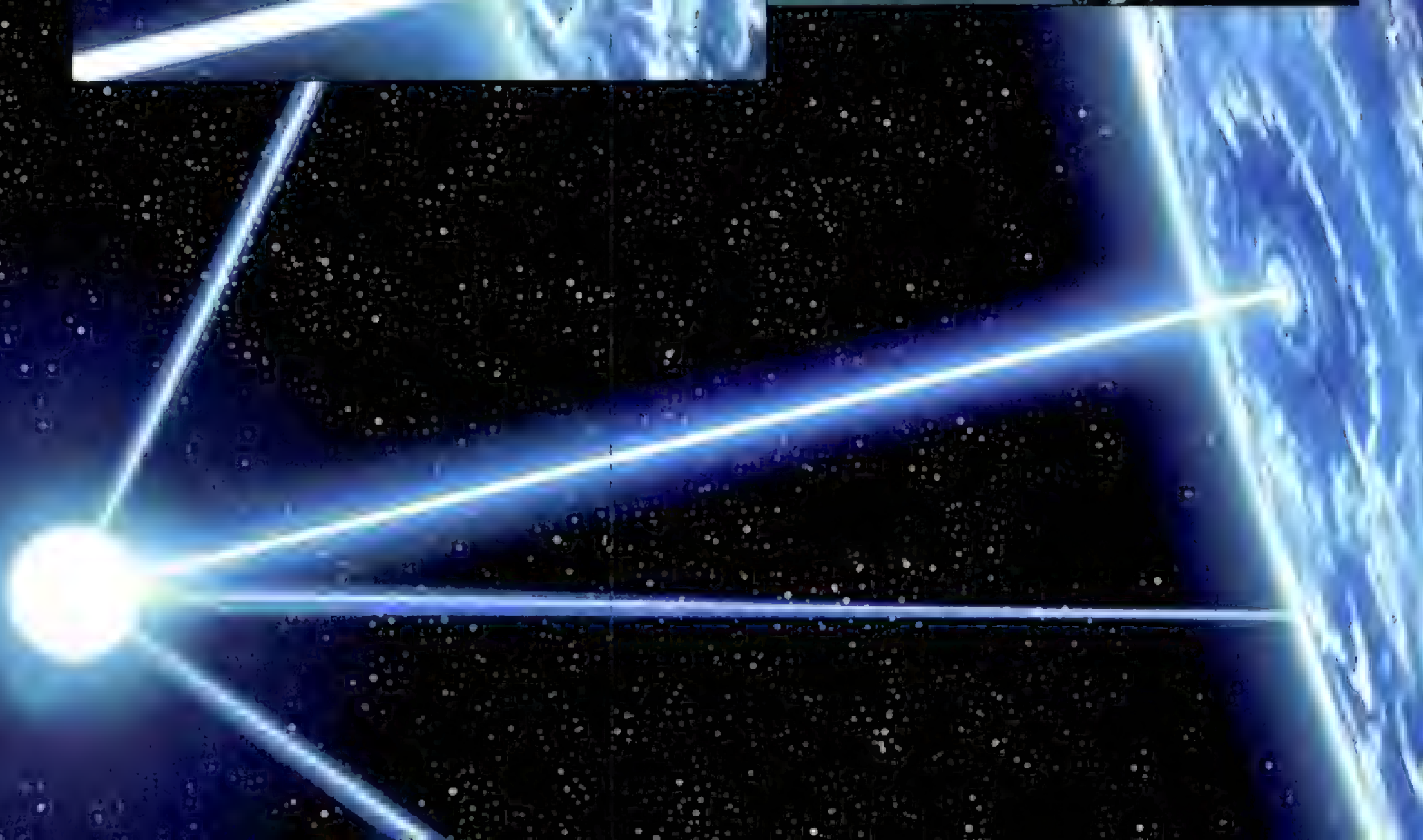
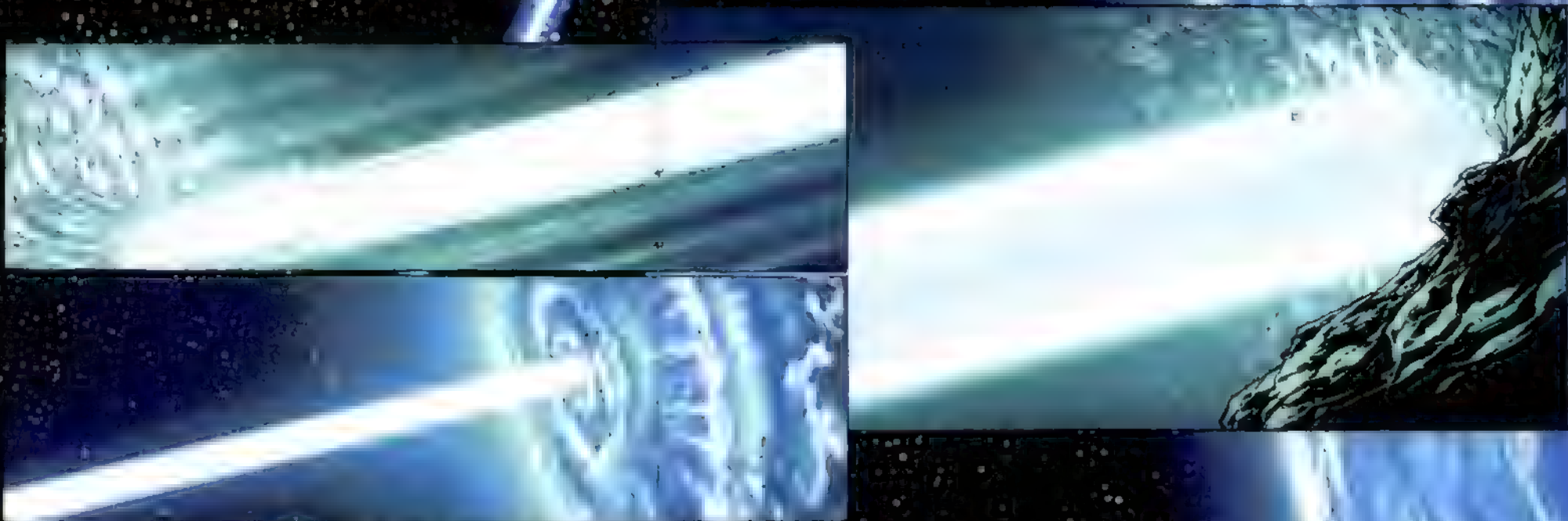


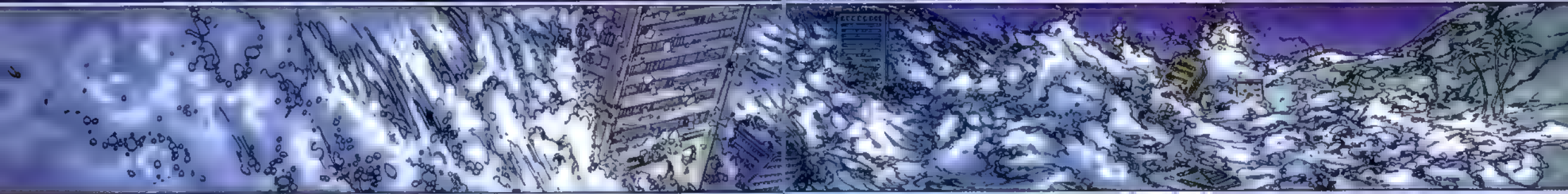
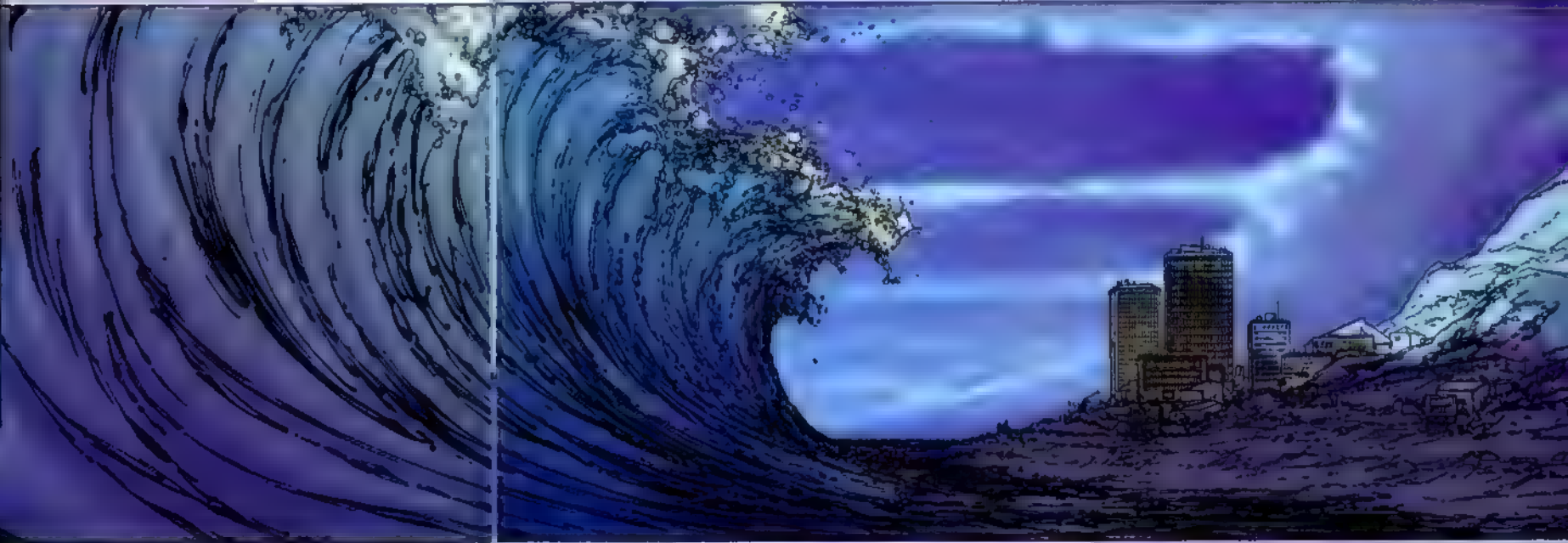
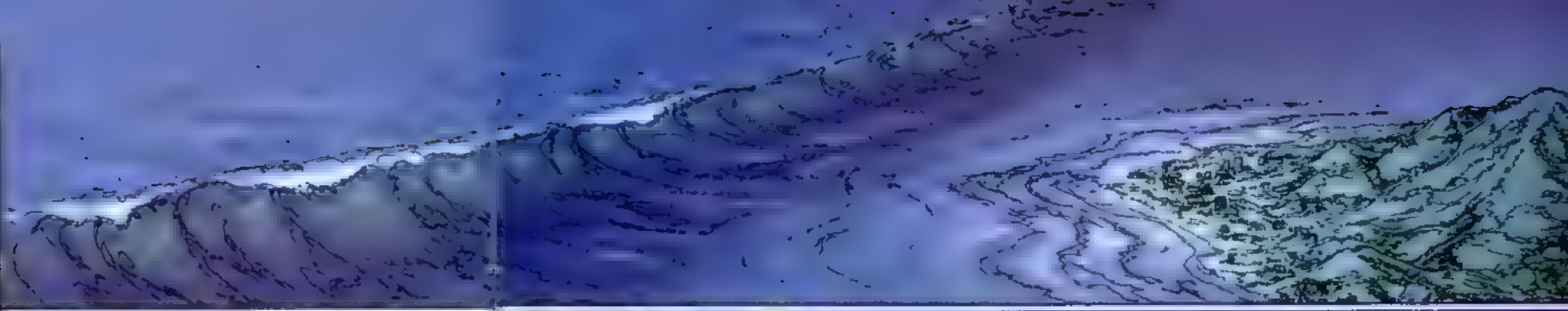
LATER, CHANCE.
I KNOW WHAT KILL AN'S
TRYING TO DO.

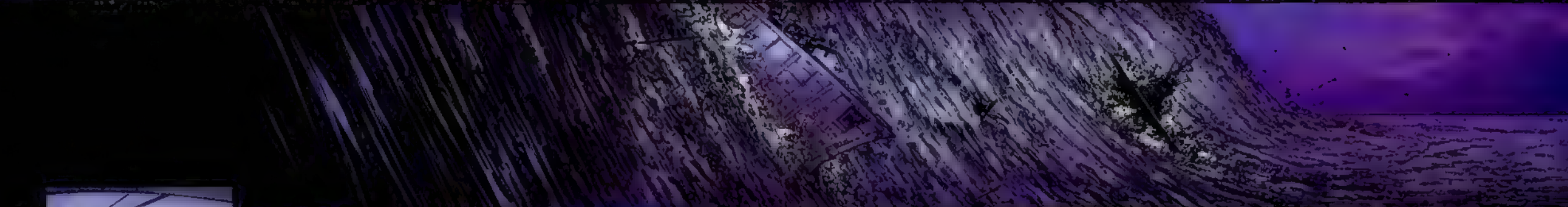


THERE
ARE A FEW
THINGS
WE--
IT'S
STARTING...







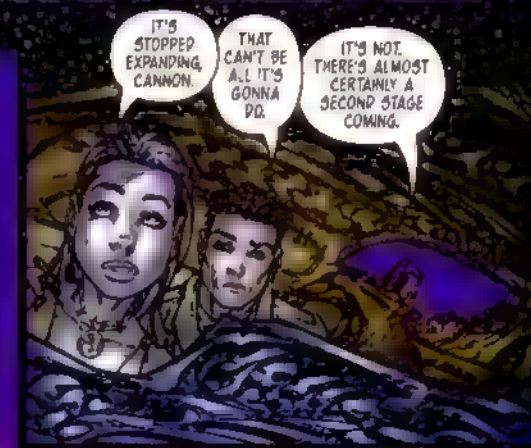
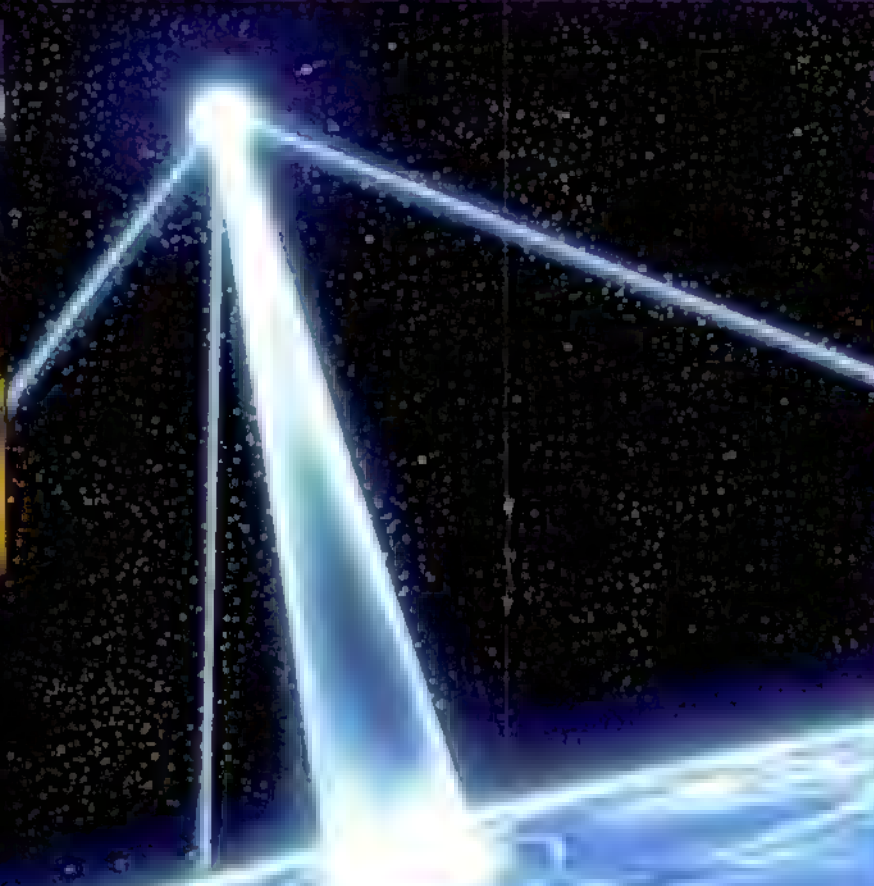


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602

MY SECRET
AND POWER
HAVE MADE
THIS

TEN
THOUSAND
YDS' WAS
WORTH
COURAGE

FOR
NOTHING



IT'S
STOPPED
EXPANDING
CANNON.

THAT
CAN'T BE
ALL IT'S
GONNA
DO.

IT'S NOT.
THERE'S ALMOST
CERTAINLY A
SECOND STAGE
COMING.



AND UNLESS
I'M COMPLETELY OFF
BASE, MILLAN'S HEADED
FOR THE CENTER OF
THAT CONE.



WE'RE
GOING TO
BE THERE
WAITING FOR
HIM.



GOD DAMN,
IT'S HUGE.

WHAT WERE YOU
EXPECTING, CHANCE?
IT'S BUILT ON A TRIPOD
THAT SPANS HALF THE
GLOBE

BRACE YOURSELVES.
IT WON'T HURT, BUT IT MIGHT
FEEL A LITTLE STRANGE ON
YOUR NERVOUS
SYSTEM.

WHAT'S
IT MADE OUT
OF?

IT'S
PURE
ENERGY.

AND YOU'RE
FLYING INTO IT?
ARE YOU
CRACKED?

TWO WORDS,
CHANCE:
DISSOLVING
BOGEY.

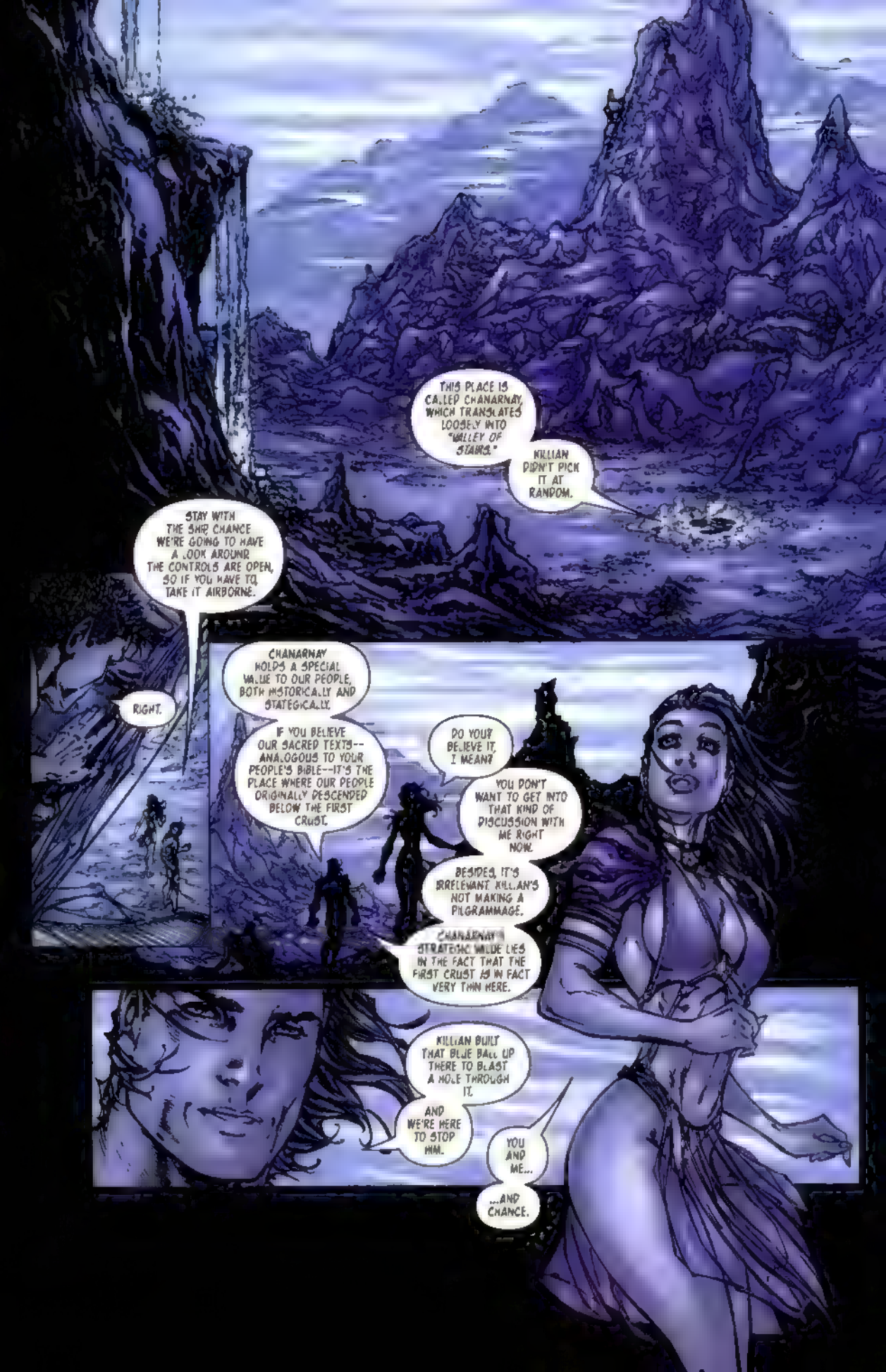
YUUN-LHH, CREEPY.
LIKE FINGERNAILS ON A
BLACKBOARD ALL OVER
MY INSIDES.

BETTER THAN
LIKE A FLY ON A
WINDSHIELD WOULDN'T
YOU SAY?

DEFINITE--
HEY! IT'S
HOLLOW!

WHEN THE BEAM
EXPANDED IT PUSHED
ASIDE THE WATER. THAT
ENERGY FIELD WE PASSED
THROUGH WAS REACTING
WITH THE WATER IN YOUR
BODY TO GIVE YOU
THAT CREEPY
FEELING.

CANNON,
WHY IS KILLIAN
COMING
HERE?



STAY WITH
THE SHIP CHANCE
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE
A LOOK AROUND
THE CONTROLS ARE OPEN,
SO IF YOU HAVE TO
TAKE IT AIRBORNE.

THIS PLACE IS
CALLED CHANARNAY,
WHICH TRANSLATES
LOOSELY INTO
"VALLEY OF
STAIRS."

KILLIAN
DIDN'T PICK
IT AT
RANDOM.

RIGHT.

CHANARNAY
HOLDS A SPECIAL
VALUE TO OUR PEOPLE,
BOTH HISTORICALLY AND
STRATEGICALLY.

IF YOU BELIEVE
OUR SACRED TEXTS--
ANALOGOUS TO YOUR
PEOPLE'S BIBLE--IT'S THE
PLACE WHERE OUR PEOPLE
ORIGINALLY DESCENDED
BELOW THE FIRST
CRUST.

DO YOU
BELIEVE IT,
I MEAN?

YOU DON'T
WANT TO GET INTO
THAT KIND OF
DISCUSSION WITH
ME RIGHT
NOW.

BESIDES, IT'S
IRRELEVANT KILLIAN'S
NOT MAKING A
PILGRIMAGE.

CHANARNAY
STRATEGIC VALUE LIES
IN THE FACT THAT THE
FIRST CRUST IS IN FACT
VERY THIN HERE.

KILLIAN BUILT
THAT BLUE BALL UP
THERE TO BLAST
A HOLE THROUGH
IT.

AND
WE'RE HERE
TO STOP
HIM.

YOU
AND
ME...

...AND
CHANCE.



"THE FIRST STAGE
OF THE BEAM CLEARED
AWAY THE WATER
BECAUSE THE SECOND
STAGE—THE DRILL
ITSELF—WOULDN'T WORK
IN THE WATER."

"SO WE'RE
GOING TO FIGURE
OUT A WAY TO
FLOOD CHANARNAV
AGAIN BEFORE
THAT DRILL GOES
TO WORK."

"CANNON, THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
I PINNED TWO STAGES OF THAT WEAPON.
THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY IT'S MAKING.
I CAN'T RUN THE WORDS TO IT."

...ARE WE
GOING TO
STOP ALL OF
THEM?

YES.

HOW?

AFTER THAT
BLUE SUN PUNCHES
THROUGH THE FIRST CRUST,
IT'S GOING TO BURN OUT.
THE OCEAN WILL FLOOD
BACK IN, AND IT'LL GO
POURING DOWN A BRAND
NEW DRAIN.

ON THE SURFACE,
THE LOWERED OCEAN
LEVEL WILL BE
CATASTROPHIC.

AS FOR
THE INNER WORLD
YOUR BIRTH-
PLACE...

YOU'VE NEVER
SEEN IT, ASPEN.
IF YOU EVER
WANT TO--



...THEN WE'VE GOT
TO FIND A WAY TO STOP
THEM FROM HERE.

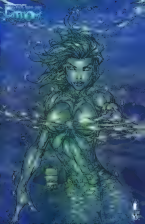
TO BE
CONTINUED...



MICHAEL TURNER'S
FATHOM

9 \$2.50
D&T C&W





FABRION



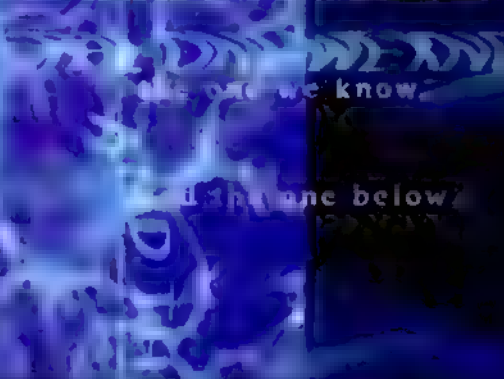


FATHOM *an image comics series*



There are two worlds

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MICHAEL TURNER
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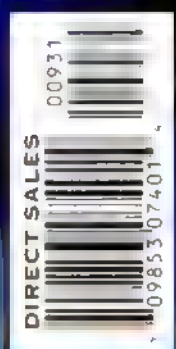
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Steve Liang
Jose Guillen

We neglected to acknowledge them for their help in
this book. Sorry, it's Ross' fault.

An EXTREME special thanks to
OUR FANS!

Your support and appreciation has been a source of inspi-
ration, you mean a lot to all of us and to myself especially.
Michael



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MY
GOD...

I CHALLENGE EVERYONE
TO TAKE THE FIGHTING STANES
WITH ME AND MAKE ME
KNOW THAT I AM THE
GOD OF THE FUTURE

HOW I KNOW
I KNOW
THAT IS THE FUTURE
I WAS BORN FOR

IT'S ALREADY
BEHIND ME
AND I'M
GOING

YOU SHOULD HAVE JOINED ME BACK WHEN I GAVE YOU THE CHANCE. MAYBE NOW YOU'RE GOING TO DIE, AND FOR WHAT?

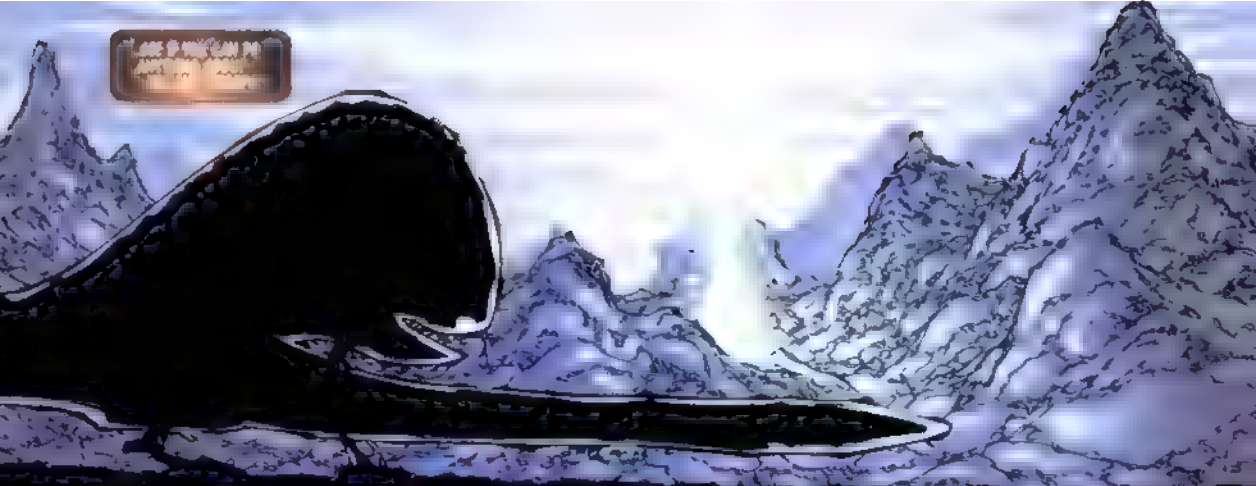
THE WEAPON IS IN A CHAIN-REACTION STATE. IT'S GOING TO MELT THROUGH THE CRUST AND YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO STOP IT.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW THAT THE LAST MINUTES OF YOUR LIFE HAVE BEEN WHOLLY WASTED?

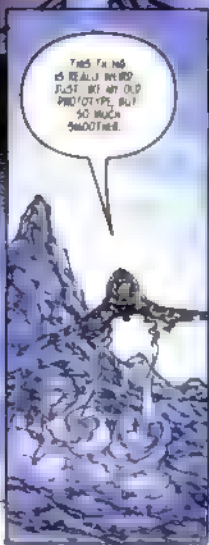
MAN, I'VE HAD IT WITH HIM. LOOK, CANNON, YOU SAID WE HAVE TO FLOOD THE VALLEY IF I CAN GET TO THE BARRIER. COME, MAYBE I CAN FIND A WAY TO LET WATER THROUGH IT.

IT'S WORTH A SHOT. CHANCE CAN TAKE YOU THERE FAST.

CHANCE, YOU READ HER. I NEED YOU TO TAKE ASPEN TO THE BARRIER. COME, AND AS LONG AS YOU'RE AIRBORNE...



YOU GOT IT.

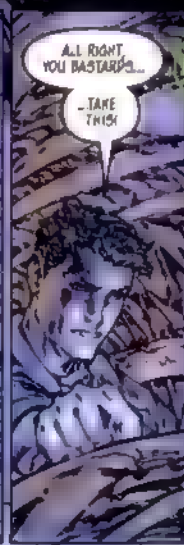


THIS F.A.N.G. IS REALLY NEW! JUST MY OLD PROTOTYPE, BUT SO MUCH SMOOTHER.



CANNON, I'VE GOT A DEAD ON A PACK OF 'EM. KEEP YOUR HEADS DOWN.

UNDERSTOOD



ALL RIGHT, YOU BASTARDS...

-TAKE THIS!



Self Destruct activated. For your safety, count down - one minute.



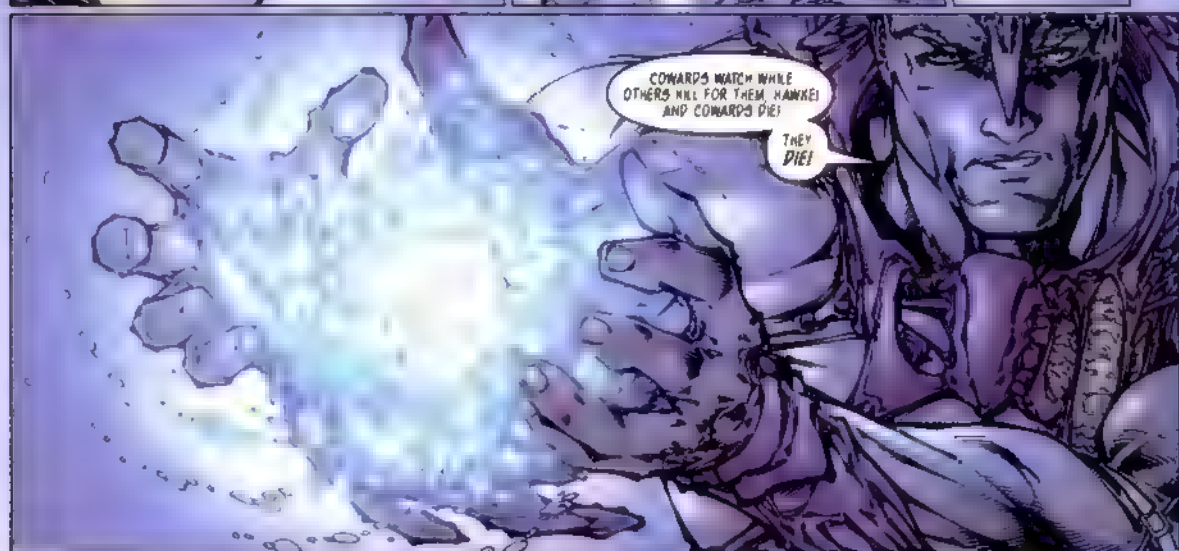
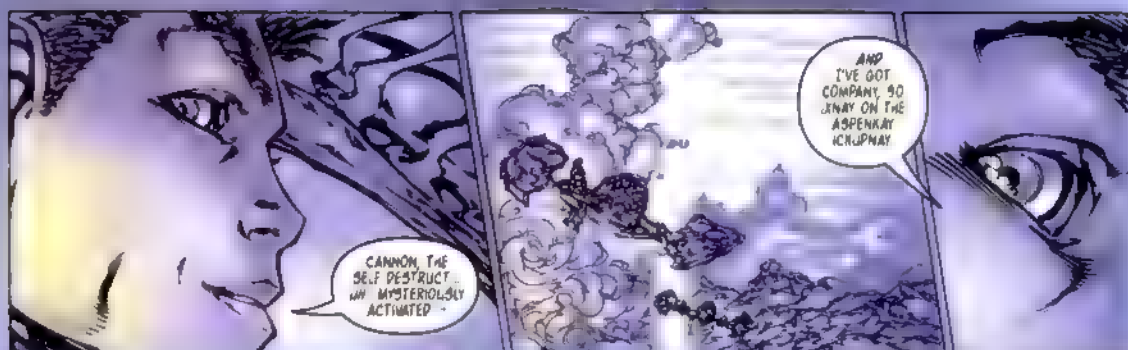
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME...

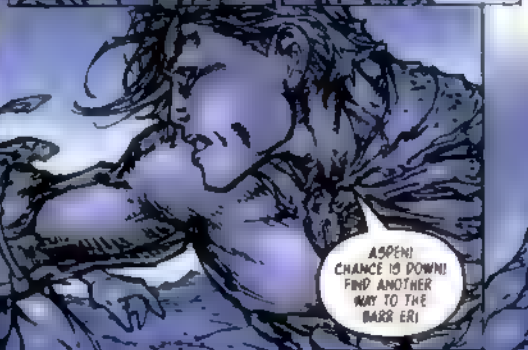
HOW ABOUT THIS ONE? I DON'T THINK ONE. I DON'T THINK ONE.



YEAH! WHO'S THE MAN!



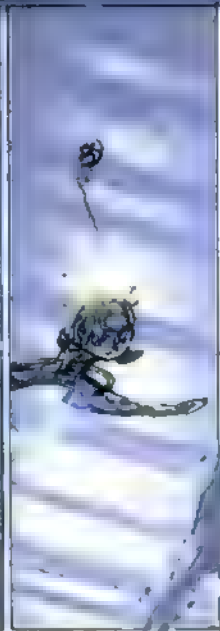


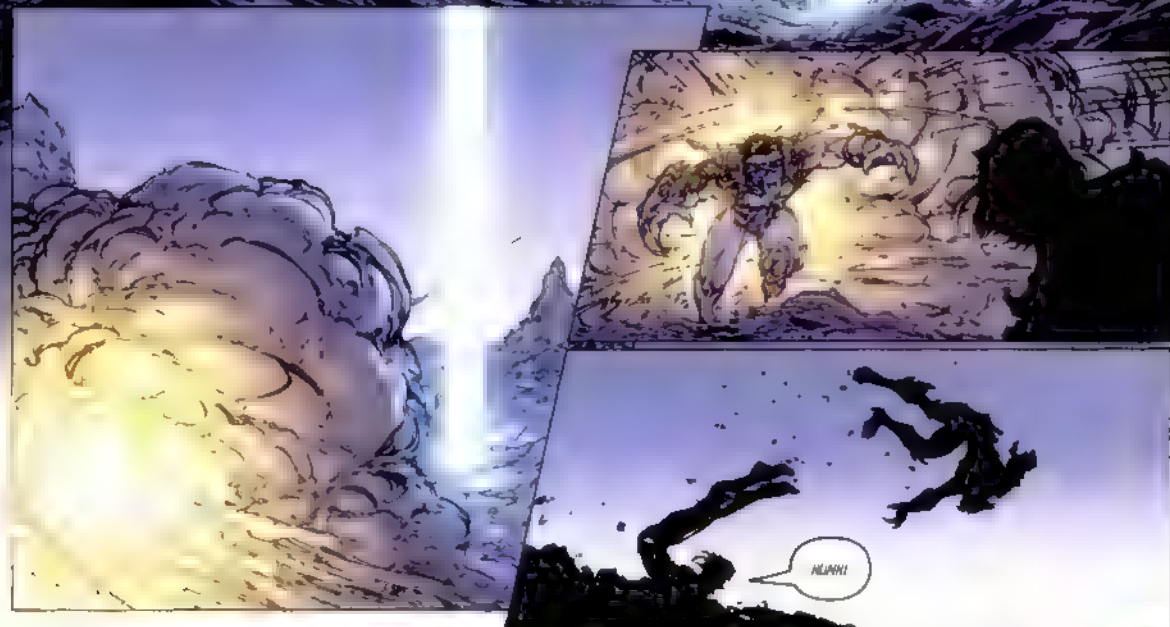
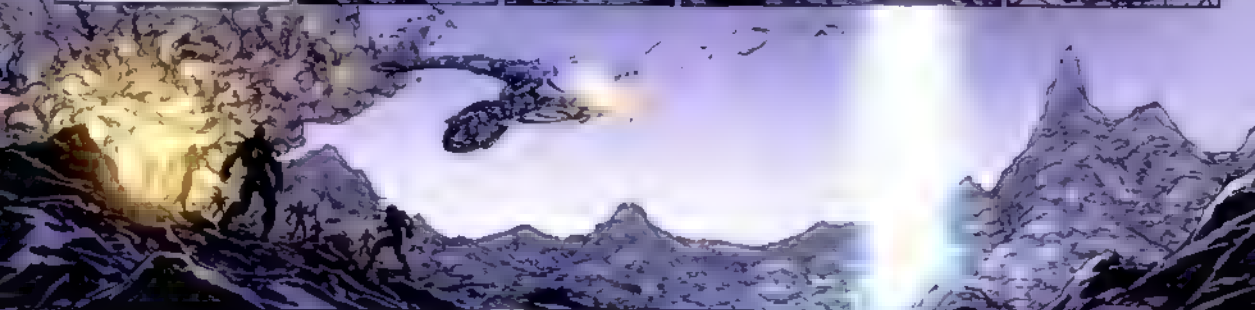


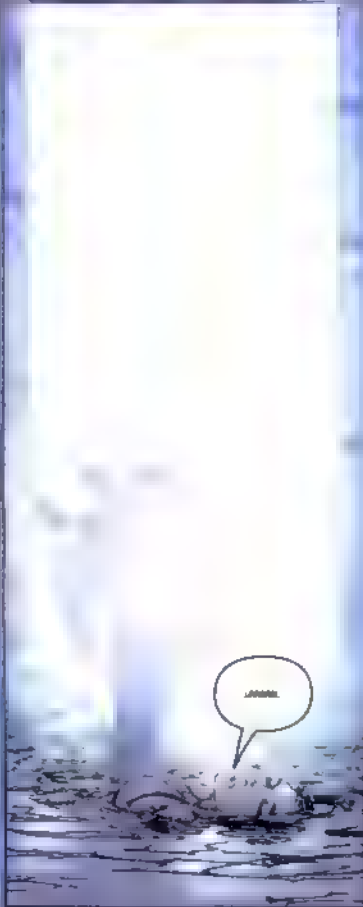
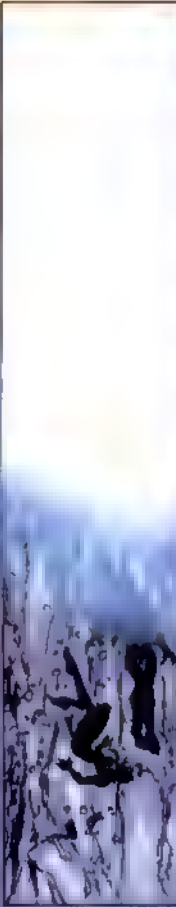
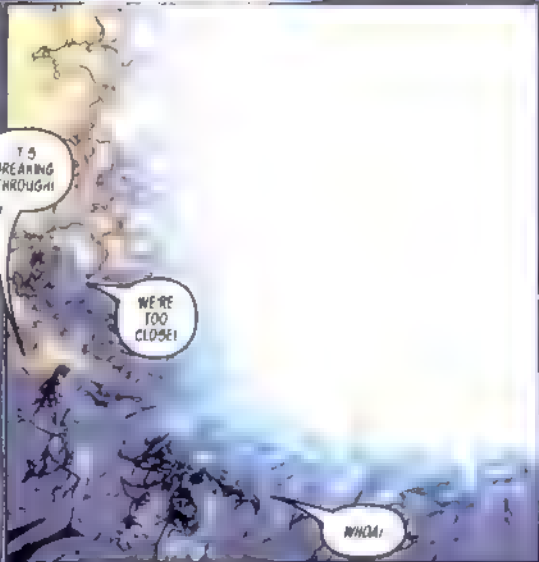
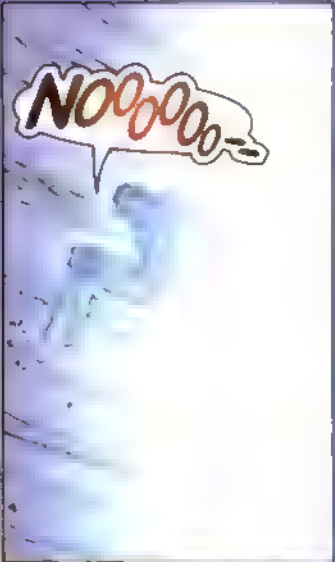
ASPEN! CHANCE IS DOWN! FIND ANOTHER WAY TO THE BARRERI

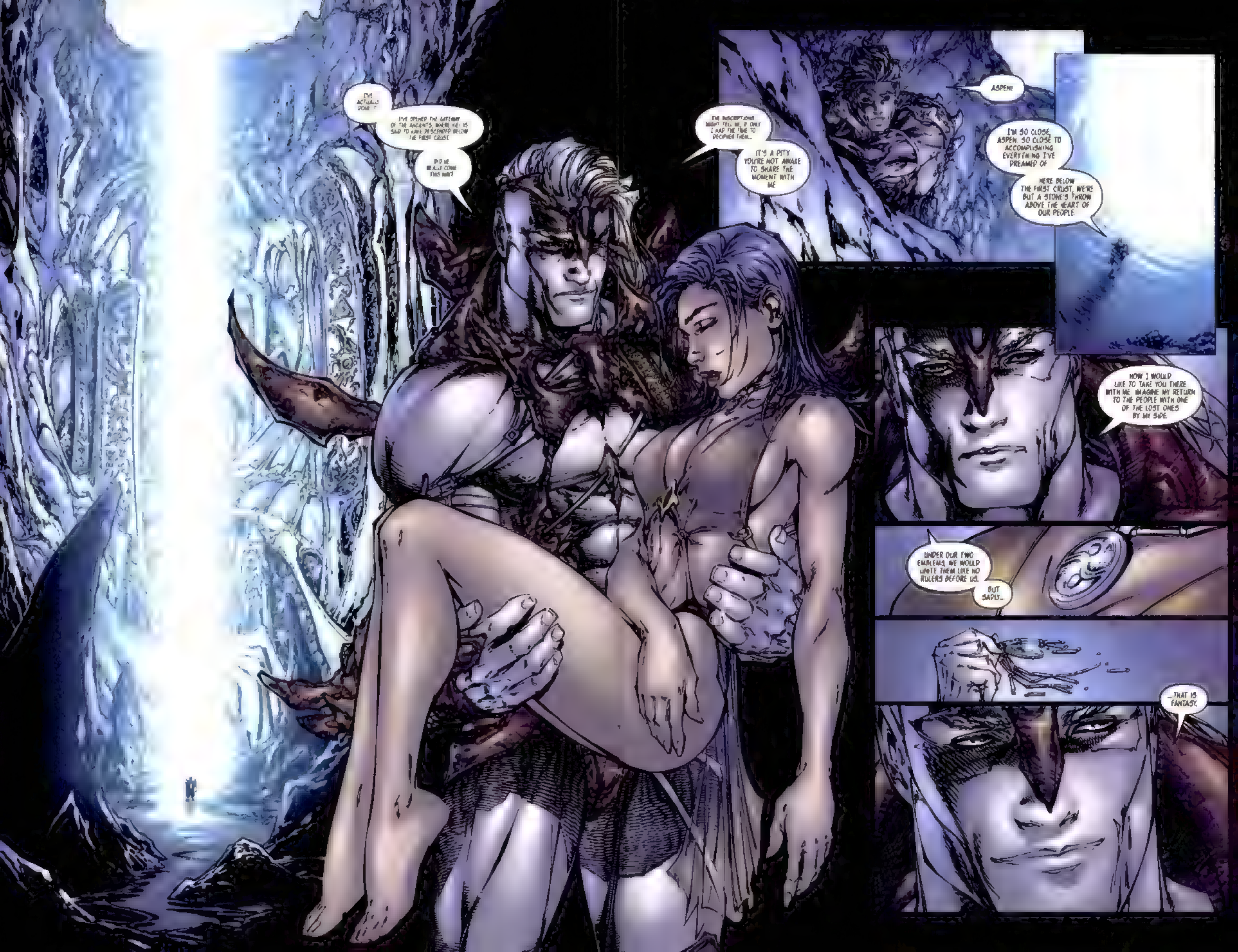


COME ON, THERE HAS TO BE AN EFFECT HERE SOMEWHERE!









I'M
ACTUALLY
DONE Y

I'VE OPENED THE GATEWAY
OF THE ANCIENTS, WHERE HE'S
SAID TO HAVE DESCENDED BELOW
THE FIRST CRUISE

DID HE
REALLY COME
THIS FAR?

THE DISCREPANCY
WOULDN'T TELL ME, IF ONLY
I HAD THE TIME TO
DECIPHER THEM...

IT'S A PITY
YOU'RE NOT AWAKE
TO SHARE THE
MOMENT WITH
ME

ASPEN!

I'M SO CLOSE,
ASPEN. SO CLOSE TO
ACCOMPLISHING
EVERYTHING I'VE
DREAMED OF

HERE BELOW
THE FIRST CRUISE, WE'RE
BUT A STONE'S THROW
ABOVE THE HEART OF
OUR PEOPLE

HOW I WOULD
LIKE TO TAKE YOU THERE
WITH ME. IMAGINE MY RETURN
TO THE PEOPLE WITH ONE
OF THE LOST ONES
BY MY SIDE.

UNDER OUR TWO
EMBLEMS, WE WOULD
WRITE THEM LIKE NO
RULERS BEFORE US.

BUT
SADLY...

...THAT IS
FANTASY.



KILL HIM
WOOD!



YOU HAVE
SOMETHING TO
SAY, HAWKE?



YEAH...

ASPEN'S
DEATH IS ON YOUR
CONSCIENCE -

--FOR
THE REST OF
YOUR GODDAMN
SHORT LIFE!



CONSCIENCE?
T'S YOUR CONSCIENCE
THAT HAS ALWAYS
MADE YOU WEAK,
HAWKE



I'M TOO
QUICK FOR YOU,
KILLIAN.



AND I'M
TOO RUTHLESS
FOR YOU.



YAAAH!



LIKE I SAID,
KILUAN --



-- TOO QUICK
FOR YOU.

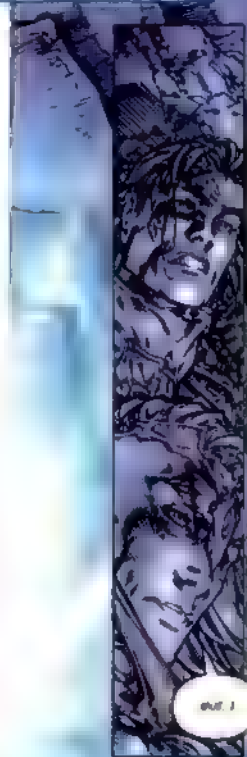


HUNNY!



HUNNY!

SO MUCH
FOR YOUR SPEED
HAVE A QUICK
TRIP TO THE
HEREAFTER --



OUT!

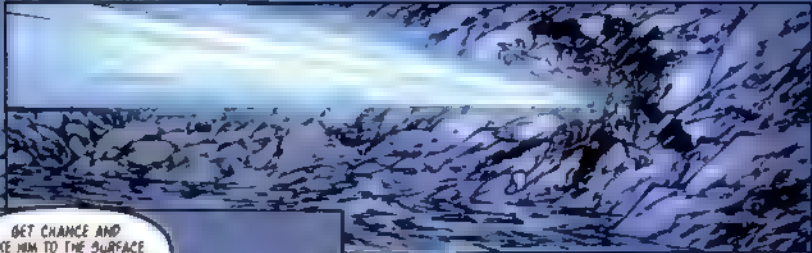
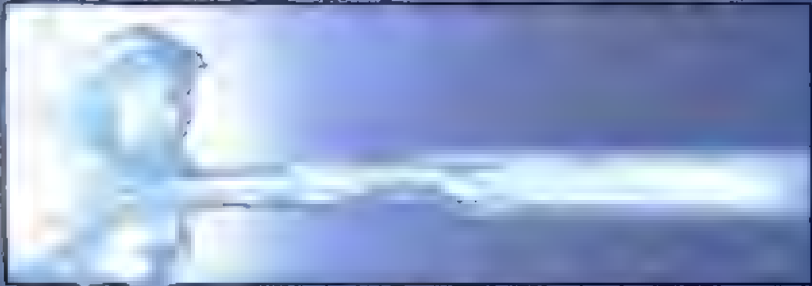


PUT
HER DOWN,
KILLIAN.

YOU ALWAYS
WANTED TO MAKE
ME INTO A WEAPON,
KILLIAN.
WELL,
NOW YOU
HAVE.



ASPEN...I
NOW...I

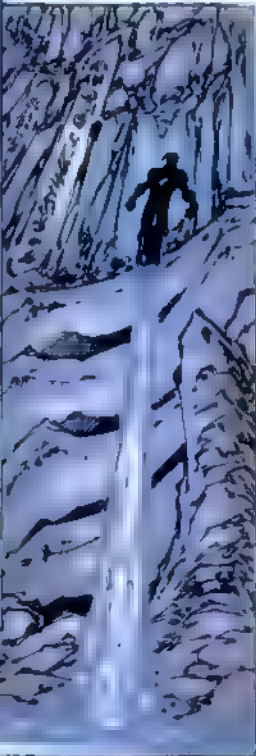


GET CHANCE AND
TAKE HIM TO THE SURFACE.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF KILLIAN...
AND THE BEAM.

IT'LL KILL
YOU, ASPEN! FORGET
IT! WE'LL DEAL WITH
THE AFTERMATH--



I SAID
I CAN STOP
IT!
NOW
GO!



AS FOR
YOU...



...YOU'VE GOT
A HELL OF A LOT
TO ANSWER
FOR.

OVER ALL THE SHOOT IN THE BARR
OF BANGORON STING TO BE THE
OF SHAW I CAN DO.

AND THE MORE WITH TORMENTING
CAUTIONS OF SHAW'S MIGHT AND
WISDOM, IF EVER ANYONE FEELS
TO BE THE SHAW, THERE'S TIME.
IT'S ALLIAN.

NO
DOUBT
ABOUT
IT.

OF ALL THE
PEOPLE I'VE EVER
KNOWN.

I GURE PICKED
THE TRIPPEST WAY
TO DE.

YOU
CAN'T...

...DO
THIS...

THAT
FEELS
GOOD

I NEED IT
AUNT!

...TO

MEEEEEE!



THE FIRST THING I
WANTED TO DO WAS
TO GET OUT OF
HERE. I WASN'T
GOING TO STAY
AND WATCH THE
EARTH GET
DESTROYED.

WHO WOULD
BE SO DUMB AS
TO BELIEVE THAT
THE PLANET IS
SAFE? NO ONE
WAS. NO ONE.

AND THE SACRIFICE
WASN'T WORTH IT.
I HATE IT HERE.

THEY UNDERSTOOD THE REAL
DANGER OF THE EARTH
AND WERE GOING TO
CRASH IT.

THEY HAD TO GO FOR SOMEONE
TO LEARN OF THEIR NEIGHBORS UNDER
THE NAME OF THEIRS. ANY MORE FOR
A FUTURE INFORMATION BETWEEN
THE PEOPLE.

THE WEAPON
HAD TO BE STOPPED.

I TOLD CAROL I WOULD DO IT.
AND I CAN DO THAT AS I KNOW
YOUR PLACE WITH BEATING SOMEONE
TO SAY THANKS FOR SOMETHING TO
SAY ANYTHING AT ALL.







THE
BARRIER'S
COLLAPSE!

ASPEN
KILLED THE
BEAM! LET'S GO
LET'S GO
LET'S GO!

GO!
GO
WHERE?



JUST
HANG ON!

YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO TELL
ME!



DON'T LET
GO DON'T DROP
ME PLEASE DON'T
GO GO GO
GO--

WILL
YOU SHUT
UP?



I DON'T
SEE HER

CHANCE
ASPEN STEPPED INTO
THAT BEAM, AND SHE
STOPPED IT...
SOMEHOW.

...AND IF IT DIDN'T
KILL HER THEN THE WATER
DID.

BUT CAN'T
SHE TURN HERSELF
TO WATER?

SHE MIGHT HAVE
TRIED BUT TURBULENCE
LIKE THAT WOULD PULL
HER APART FOREVER.

OH.

I'M
STARTING
TO GET THE
PICTURE

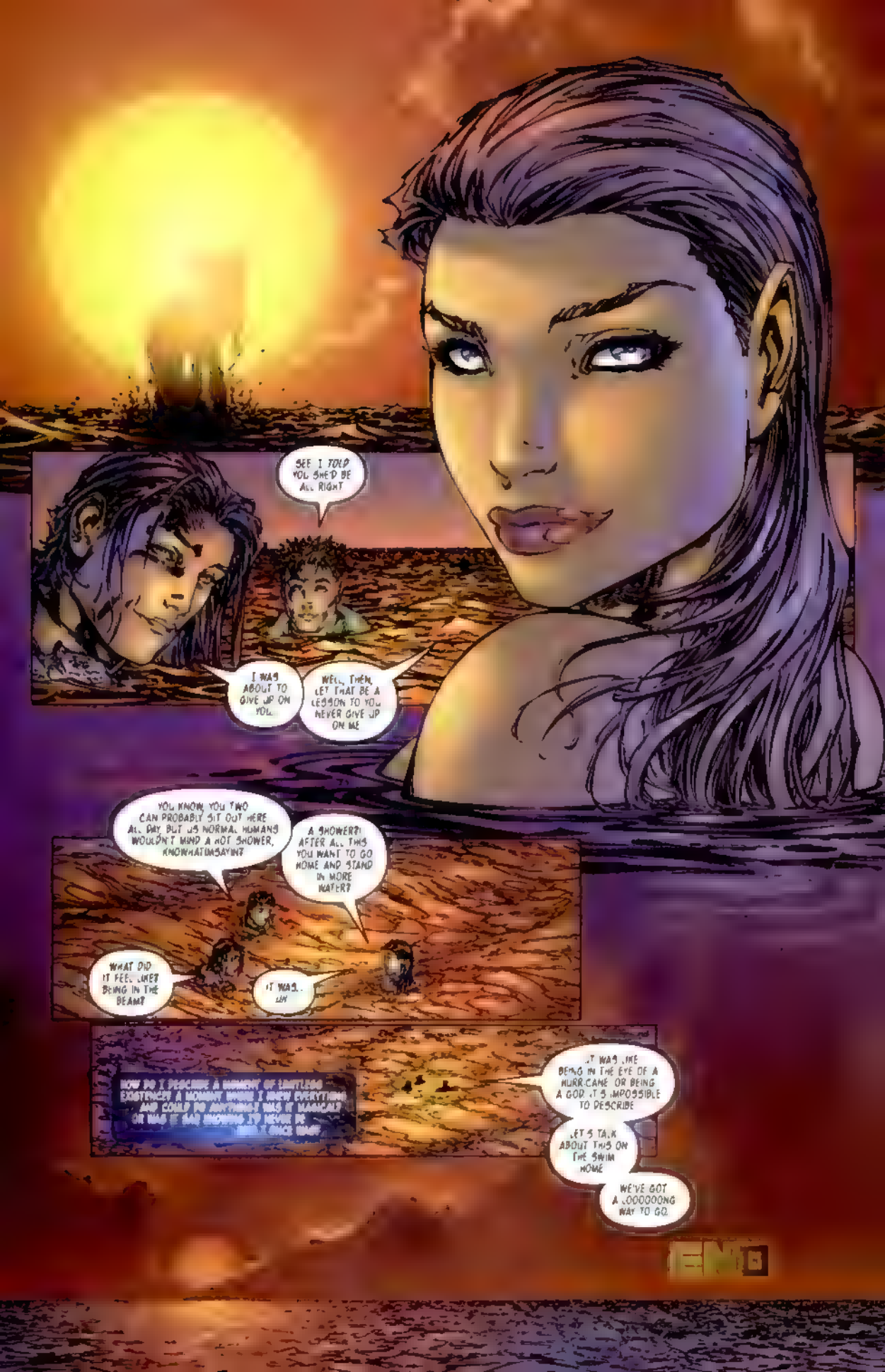
YEAH.
IT'S BAD.

SHE SACRIFICED
HERSELF TO SAVE
US.

JUST
THINK ABOUT
HER

...FEEL HER ENERGY
IN THE WATER ALL
AROUND US...

...AND
LET HER
GO.



SEE I TOLD
YOU SHE'D BE
ALL RIGHT

I WAS
ABOUT TO
GIVE UP ON
YOU

WELL, THEN
LET THAT BE A
LESSON TO YOU
NEVER GIVE UP
ON ME

YOU KNOW YOU TWO
CAN PROBABLY SIT OUT HERE
ALL DAY BUT US NORMAL HUMANS
WOULDN'T MIND A HOT SHOWER.
KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING?

A SHOWER?
AFTER ALL THIS
YOU WANT TO GO
HOME AND STAND
IN MORE
WATER?

WHAT DID
IT FEEL LIKE
BEING IN THE
BEAM?

IT WAS...
UH

HOW DO I DESCRIBE A MOMENT OF LIMITLESS
EXISTENCE? A MOMENT WHERE I KNOW EVERYTHING
AND COULD DO ANYTHING? WAS IT MAGICAL?
OR WAS IT JUST NOTHING? IT NEVER DO
I CAN'T SAY

IT WAS THE
FEELING IN THE EYE OF A
HURRICANE OR BEING
A GOD. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
TO DESCRIBE

LET'S TALK
ABOUT THIS ON
THE SWIM
HOME

WE'VE GOT
A LOOOOOONG
WAY TO GO.

END

TOP GUN



10 \$2.50
JAN ADRI CAN

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM

TURNER
O'NEIL
WEEKS
SMITH



MICHAEL
TURNER
JON
O'NEIL
JO SMITH
1999

FATHOM



There are two worlds. One we know.

MICHAEL TURNER

story by BILL O'NEIL

MICHAEL TURNER

script by JOE WEEMS

JONATHAN SIBAL

EDWIN ROSELL

JONATHAN D. SMITH

STEVE FIRCHOW

DENNIS HEISLER

MATT HAWKINS

RENAE GEERLINGS

MARCO "MADMAN" GALLI

PETER STEIGERWALD

ANNIE SKILES

TRICK CHUN, ALVIN COATS

KALL ANJOYO, ROBIN SPEHAR

MICHAEL TURNER

JONATHAN SIBAL

JONATHAN D. SMITH

MICHAEL TURNER

JOE WEEMS

JONATHAN D. SMITH

Happy Birthday to
Shain Colombo

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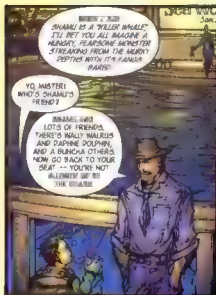
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WHA! WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?

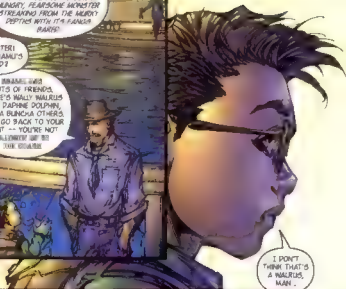


SHAMU IS A "KILLER WHALE" IT'LL BET YOU ALL IMAGINE A HUNGRY, FEARFUL MASTER STREAKING FROM THE MUDRY DEPTHS WITH IT'S FANGS BARE!

YO, MASTER! WHO'S SHAMU'S FRIEND?

SHAMU HAS LOTS OF FRIENDS, THERE'S MALLY MAULUS AND DAPHNE DOLPHIN, AND A BUNCH OF OTHERS, NOW GO BACK TO YOUR SEAT -- YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED UP IN THE CHAIRS

San



I DON'T THINK THAT'S A WARRIOR, MAN.



BUT THE TRUTH IS, KILLER WHALES ARE SMART, FRIENDLY, WONDERFUL ANIMALS, AND OUR FRIEND SHAMU IS THE BEST OF THE PUNCH

AND TODAY FOLKS, WE'RE GOING TO SHOW YOU JUST HOW MUCH SHAMU LOVES US

COME ON, NO I SAID BACK TO YOUR SEAT



WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM OUT THERE WHO BROUGHT AN UMBRELLA, NOW'S THE TIME TO GET 'EM READY! COME ON, DON'T BE SHY!

JIMBO, OUR FEARLESS TRAINER IS GOING FOR A KEY



...ON SHAMU'S NOSE!

FOLKS, WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM IT'S DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!



LET'S HEAR IT FOR SHAMU, FOLKS! LET'S HEAR IT FOR JIMBO!



WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!



SHAMU'S
FREAKED OUT
BUT SHE'S NOT
HURT!

WHERE'D
THAT MONSTER
COME FROM?

WHAT
WAS

I CHEWED
THROUGH THE
GATE!!

I THINK IT
WAS A ROGUE
KILLER WHALE

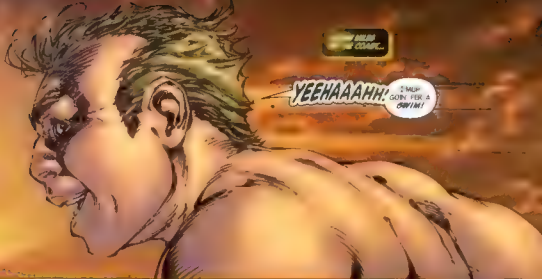
RIGHT, THAT WAS
A SMART, FRIENDLY,
WONDERFUL ANIMAL!
GIMME A BREAK!

PAUL, GET HOLD OF
JIMBO'S PEOPLE AND TRY
TO EXPLAIN. NEVER MIND
JUST CALL IT AN ACCIDENT
FOR THE TIME BEING.

I'VE GOT
TO PREPARE
FOR A PRESS
NIGHTMARE

WE'VE GOT TO
GET A CREW AFTER
THAT THING. WHAT IF IT
HEADS FOR A PUBLIC
BEACH SOMEWHERE?

I TOLD YOU
THAT WASN'T A
WHALES, MAN



YEEHAAAAHH!

I'M
GOIN' FOR A
SWIM!



LET'S GO BABES!
COME A SWIMMIN' WIT
DE BIG MACK DADDY!
YEAH YEAH!

WAKO-HOO!

WHAT A
FREAK

NO
DOUBT

YEAH
NOT A RICH
FREAK



YEAH
A RICH
WASTED
FREAK

A RICH
WASTED FREAK
WHO CAME FROM
VEGAS

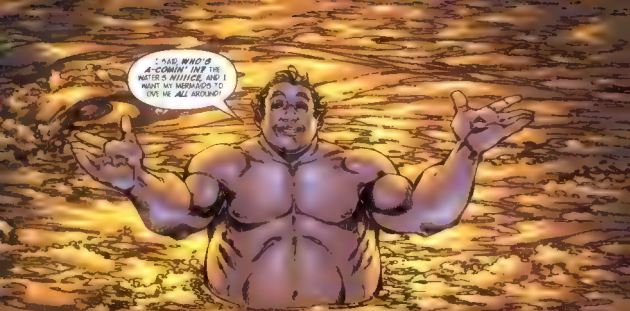
JUST WHAT I
WAS THINKING. A RICH
WASTED FREAK FRESH
FROM VEGAS...

WHO APPARENTLY
DID PRETTY WELL AT
THE TABLES

GIRLS, I WISH
TO MAKE A FORMAL
ANNOUNCEMENT. WE
ARE GOING TO HAVE
ONE HELL OF A NIGHT
ON THE TOWN

WHO'S
A-COUNTIN'?





I SAID, WHO'S
A-COMIN' INTO THE
WATER & NIIIIICE, AND I
WANT MY MERMAIDS TO
LOVE ME ALL AROUND!



BUT, BIG MACK
SWIMMING IN
RUIN OUR
HAIR!

YEAH
BIGGIE, AND
OUR HAIR,
TOO.

AND YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU'RE ENJOYING
YOURSELF ENOUGH FOR
ALL FOUR OF US.



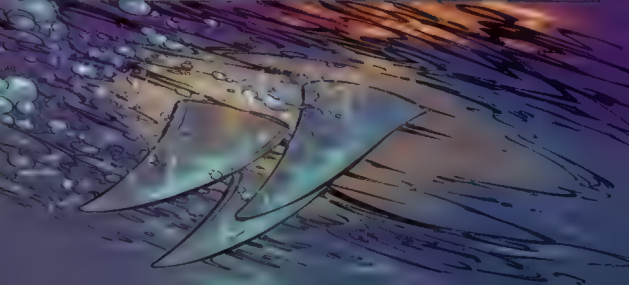
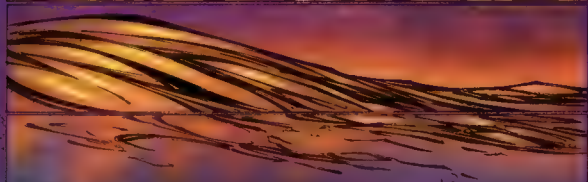
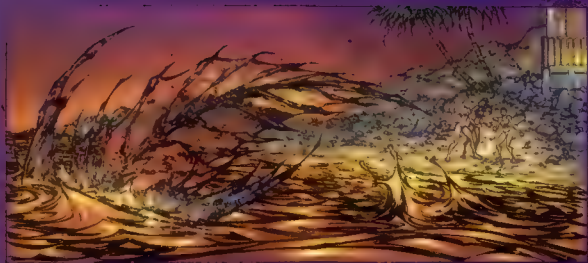
JESSE
NOPE-AY

UH
UH
UH

BIGGIE
UH
OH Y



WHY?
WHY?
WHY?
IT'S JUST
WATER! 'SALL
GOOD!



I AM A MEMBER OF THE JAMES EARL RAY

1. *Staphylococcus aureus*

THESE RESULTS ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
FINDINGS OF OTHER STUDIES THAT HAVE
SHOWN THAT THE USE OF A
SINGLE-STEP PROCESS IS MORE
EFFECTIVE THAN A TWO-STEP PROCESS.



BUT WHEN HE A LOT BETTER HE ALSO
 CHANGING. TALK MY WITH DOOMAGE
 I WANTED A SON AND THE MOTHER WHO IS
 OUT OF MY HAND NOW SHE'S
 THE SAME. IT WAS A
 NIGHT AND THE DOOMAGE
 CHANGING.

CHANCE IS STILL U.S., LEAVING LAW
FROM THE SOUTH PACIFIC. CHANCE IS
THE SOUTH PACIFIC. CHANCE IS TAKEN
HE TOLD ME, "I'VE COME TO THE
ASKING HIM TO BE THE MAN OF THE
OR TURN TO THE MAN OF THE
IT IS YOURS."

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26



LENNY'S GOT
TODAY'S
HOT CHICK



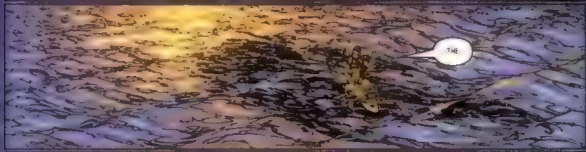
HE TRIED TO CONVINCE
ME TO JOIN HIM RIGHT
AWAY, BUT I'D JUST
WALK THROUGH AS
MUCH AS I COULD, AND
I TOLD HIM I WOULD
HAVE TO THINK ABOUT
IT FIRST
WITH HIM



WHA? PLEASE, THAT'S FROM THE HANGOVER
WAKE TO ANOTHER. ACTUALLY, I DON'T
KNOW WHO THAT IS, BUT SHE HAD
A VERY GOOD POINT. I AGREE WITH

MY LIFE HAS BEEN
THE SAME SINCE
I GOT HERE

WHO?



THE?



HEU?

WAS THAT
A WHALE? THIS
CLOSE TO
SHORE?

WEIRD
DANGEROUS
TOO!

I BETTER GO
CALL "THE COAST"
GUARD

OH.

IT'S LIKE TO
BE A WHALE

...THE IDEA THAT I
CAN NO LONGER
WALK ON THE BEACH
IN THE SAND

JASON INCLUDES
CHANGING A WHALE
TALKING TO THE
COAST GUARD

THE
NEW
52

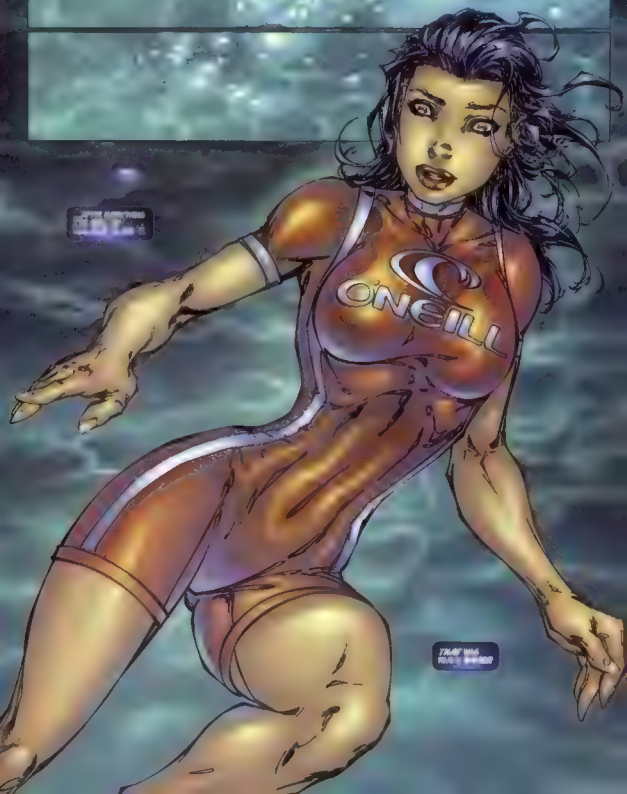
THESE ARE THE REPORTS OF
EXTENSIVE AND CHANGING
SOURCES OF THE
WORLD'S
LEADING
NEWSPAPERS

WAAAA

THE
NEW
52

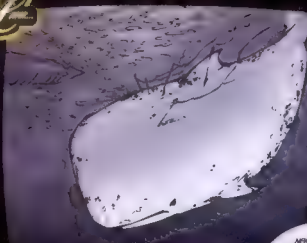
THE
NEW
52





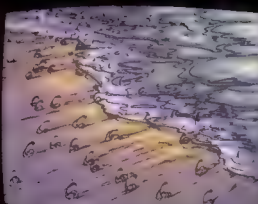
THE O'NEILL

THE O'NEILL



ARK, NIS
AND THE GREAT
WHITE WHALE
TOOK AN LGE

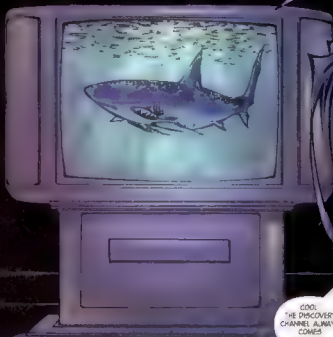
YEAH
NEXT



IN AUCKLAND,
NEW ZEALAND, A SPECIES
OF SHELLFISH THOUGHT TO HAVE
BEEN EXTINCT SINCE THE LAST ICE AGE
CRANKED ASHORE FRIDAY, MARKING THE
FOURTH TIME IN AS MANY YEARS THAT
SPECIES ONCE CONSIDERED EXTINCT
HAVE CURRENTLY REEMERGED. BIOLOGISTS
SUSPECT THAT THE BLUE SUN TRIGGERED
THE REAPPEARANCE, BUT ARE AT
A LOSS TO EXPLAIN HOW.
IN OTHER NEWS

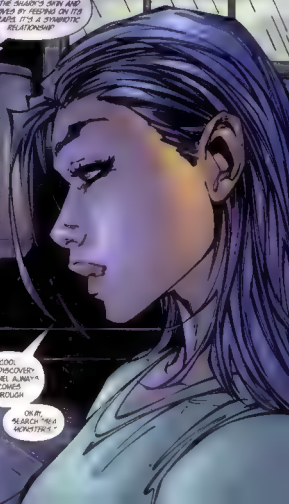
I WONDER
HOW LONG THIS'LL
KEEP UP THESE
"REAPPEARANCES"
HAHAHA
NEXT

THE
PIET FISH CLINGS
TO THE SHARK'S SKIN AND
SURVIVES BY FEEDING ON ITS
BLOOD. IT'S A SYMBIOTIC
RELATIONSHIP



COOL.
"THE DISCOVERY
CHANNEL ALWAYS
COMES
THROUGH

OKAY,
SEARCH "M4
MONSTERS"





"INFLUENCE ALTERNATIVE"
"PSYCHONORMAL PHENOMENA"
"CRYPTOZOOLOGY" IN OTHER
WORDS, "YEAH, RIGHT"



STILL

A YEAR AGO
WE AND MY DOCTORATE
IN MARINE BIOLOGY WOULD'VE
LAUGHED AT THE IDEA OF
PEOPLE LIVING IN
THE WATER



NOW I KNOW
THEY DO. SO MAYBE
SEA MONSTERS
ARE REAL



THAT THING I
SAID DIDN'T LOOK LIKE
YOUR TRADITIONAL SEA
SERPENT, THOUGH. ISN'T
THERE ANYTHING
ELSE?

HOW COME I CAN FIND
A TON OF THINGS ON THE
WEB I DON'T REALLY CARE
ABOUT, AND EVERY TIME I
REALLY WANT TO KNOW
SOMETHING IT'S NOT
THERE?



KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK



WHO COULD
THAT BE, IN THIS
WEATHER?





LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT AS FAR AS YOU KNOW, YOU JUST MAGICALLY **APPEARED** ON MY DOORSTEP? YOU DON'T REMEMBER COMING HERE?

UH, YES MAYAM. THAT DOES SEEM TO BE RIGHT.

WELL, SEE THE THING IS I REMEMBER YOU. YOU ALMOST RAN ME DOWN OUT IN THE WATER THIS AFTERNOON YOU AND THAT CRAZY BOAT. YOU EVEN FLASHED ME A SAWJITE. SO I FIND YOUR STORY A LITTLE HARD TO BELIEVE.

AS I SAID, MA AM THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ME IN A WHAT DID YOU CALL IT? A **SUBMARINE**? I'M NOT OLD ENOUGH TO PILOT MY OWN VESSEL, AND EVEN IF I WAS I HATE THE WATER, I'M TERRIFIED OF IT.

HATE THE WATER, HAY? I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE A TWIN BROTHER?

I'M AN ONLY WILD, SO FAR AS MY MOTHER EVER HAD.

NOT LONG AGO I WAS CABIN BOY ABOARD THE VESSEL **SPELLBINDER** THAT HAD VESSEL UNDER COMMAND OF A MAD CAPTAIN. HE DROVE US BEYOND ALL REASON, THEN TOOK US TOO CLOSE TO THE MONSTER AND LAUGHED AS THE BEAST GROUND US TO BITS. I'VE NOT BEEN BACK TO THE SEA SINCE IT GIVES ME HIVES.

YOU **CAN'T** BE SERIOUS. FIRST OF ALL, YOU'RE NOT A KID, YOU'RE AT **LEAST** A MILLION YEARS OLD. AND SECOND, LOOK AT THE WAY YOU'RE DRESSED. YOU'RE ONE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE WATER. DO YOU KNOW CANNON-HAWKET?

HAWKE. HAWKE. I KNOW THAT NAME, BU DON'T THINK HIS NAME WAS CANNON.

LOOK, YOU'RE REALLY NOT **HELPING** ME HERE. WHETHER YOU REMEMBER OR NOT, YOU **DID** COME TO MY DOOR AND YOU **MUST'VE** HAD A REASON.

NOW, I DON'T KNOW THE REASON YOU HAVE TO TELL ME...

THERE ON THE LIGHTS HANG ON A SEC.

WELL, UH...

WHAT? WHERE IS IT? WHO ARE YOU?

AAAAHHH

YEA, THE
GIFTED JASSH!
"A ABOUT TIME
WE TALKED!"

AN' ONES NABIN
AN' OFFICIALEST
REPOS!

HEHE

OUT
THIS ON,
I'LL PROTECT
YOU

HEHE

WHAT THE
HECK AS THISS
"CAN'T SEE
A THING

WHAT IS
LOOK LIKE?
A HELMET, OF
COURSE!

HERE,
LET ME GET
THAT! THERE!
YE GO!

NOW
LET'S
GO!

CURSE
MY, COME ON,
HERE'S NO TIME
TO LOSE!

WEL, IT'S
SWEET, AND
DEFINITELY THE
PERFECT LOOK
FOR ME

I THINK I'VE
FIGURED THIS ALL OUT.
I FELL ASLEEP IN FRONT
OF THE TEEVEE, AND NOW
I'M DREAMING



hey



hey, a
freaky
who is this
crazy?



oh
my

i'm
probably not
dreaming...

at least,
this has been an
unusually long dream
if i am

come aboard the
atlantis! we've a
shorty in our net! the
great white

TOP COW



Image

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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM

TURNER
ONIER
WILMS
SMITH



MICHAEL
TURNER
WILMS
JD SMITH
1999

--Fathom Zero

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TWO WORLDS
EXIST ON THIS
PLANET.

THE ONE
WE KNOW.

AND THE
ONE BELOW.

THE ONE
WE KNOW IS
FAMILIAR AND
COMFORTABLE.

BELOW THAT
PLACE LIES THE
UNFAMILIAR AND
DEFINITELY
UNCOMFORTABLE
DEPTHS THAT HIDE
UNSPEAKABLE
DANGERS.

MOST PEOPLE LIVE WITH
A MYOPIC VIEW OF THEIR
EXISTENCE. THEY'RE CONTENT
WITH THEIR HOUSE, CAR, 2.5
KIDS, DOG, TV, PINNERS, AND
OCCASIONALLY GETTING OUT
TO SEE A MOVIE. THE RULES
WERE LAID OUT CENTURIES
AGO, AND THERE IS NO NEED
FOR THEM TO EXPLORE WHAT
LIES BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES
OF THIS COMFORTABLE
PLACE.

I, ON THE OTHER HAND,
AM FASCINATED BY WHAT
LIES BEYOND "NORMAL"
BOUNDARIES—WHAT'S
BENEATH THE SURFACE.

THE
MYSTERIOUS
DEPTHS.

THE
WORLD
BELOW.



ELEVEN YEARS AGO,
MY LIFE BEGAN.

I ARRIVED ON A SHIP
WITH NO MEMORY OF
WHO I WAS OR HOW
I GOT THERE.

BECAME
ASPEN MATTHEWS,
FOSTER CHILD NUMBER
475-6.

FOR YEARS
I STRUGGLED TO PIECE
MY LIFE TOGETHER
WITH FRAGMENTS OF
DREAMS AND VISIONS
OF MY LIFE AS
A CHILD.

FROM MY TEENAGE
YEARS OF SNORKELING
AND SCUBA DIVING
TO MY HIGH SCHOOL
SWIM TEAM, TO
OLYMPIC FREESTYLE
SWIMMER, TO MARINE
BIOLOGIST.

THROUGH IT ALL,
ONE ASPECT OF
MY LIFE WAS
CONSTANT.

I WAS
FASCINATED
BY WATER.



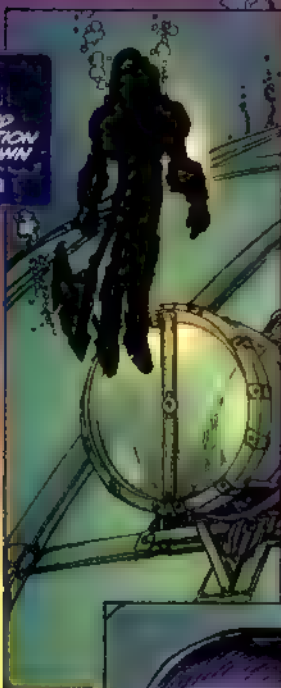
THREE MONTHS AGO,
IN THE MIDDLE OF SEVERAL
EXPERIMENTS ON DEEP WATER
MARINE LIFE PROPULSION
ANATOMY, I WAS CONTACTED BY
A DEEP MARINE DISCOVERY (DMD)
FACILITY THAT WAS CONDUCTING
SIMILAR EXPERIMENTS IN A TRENCH
FIFTY MILES NORTH OF THE
HAWAIIAN RIDGE.

THEY HAD BEEN
BUILDING A HABITAT
1200 FEET DOWN
THAT COULD SUPPORT
SCIENTISTS FOR
MONTHS.

I'M NOT SURE
WHY THEY CONTACTED
ME, BUT I WAS HAPPY
TO LET THEM SEE
MY RESULTS.

I HAVEN'T
SPOKEN TO
THEM SINCE.

I HAVE NEVER BEEN
DOWN 1200 FEET BEFORE.
THE FURTHEST DOWN I'VE
ACTUALLY BEEN IS 300, AND
THAT WAS ON AN OBSERVATION
SUBMARINE THAT WENT DOWN
AROUND THE COAST OF
SAN DIEGO.

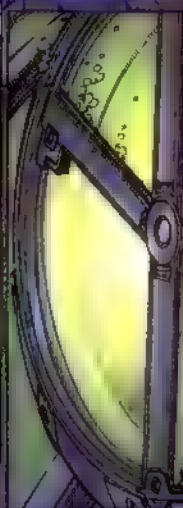


BUT
TO BE IN
AN ACTUAL
HABITAT.

...WHERE I COULD
OBSERVE FOR WEEKS,
WITHOUT HAVING TO
PUT ON MY SCUBA
GAS EVERY DAY.



I CAN ONLY
IMAGINE HOW
INCREDIBLE IT
WOULD BE TO SEE
WHAT EXISTS AT
THAT DEPTH.



I DO KNOW THAT SOME OF
THE MOST DEADLY SPECIES OF
MARINE LIFE LIVE THERE, ALL
WITH UNIQUE ADAPTATIONS
UNSEEN IN SHALLOW WATERS.



MANY OF THEM HAVE
VERY SPECIAL TACTICS
FOR ATTACKING PREY
OR DEFENDING AGAINST
PREDATORS.

SOME HUNTERS HAVE
POISONOUS BITES THAT WILL
INCAPACITATE PREY FOR THEIR
LEISURELY CONSUMPTION.
SOME OCTOPI, SQUID OR
ANEMONES DISAPPEAR IN
A CLOUD OF INK TO ELUDE
A PREDATOR.

THE MOST
VICIOUS KILLERS
ALERT THEIR
ENEMIES WITH
DISTINCTIVE
MARKINGS OR
VENOMOUS SPIRES,
AS IF TO SHOW
THE VICTIMS THAT
IT'S ALREADY
TOO LATE.



AN AMBUSH
HAS BEGUN!

HERE THE MOST
DRAIDY ATTACKS
OCCUR IN
NUMBERS.

AFTER ALL, A GROUP OF PREDATORS
ATTACKING ALL AT ONCE CAN BE
DECIDEDLY MORE DANGEROUS THAN
A LONE HUNTER.

THERE IS
STRENGTH
IN NUMBERS.

AND
THAT'S
THE
TRUTH.

IT WAS A
REALITY CHECK.

IT WAS
A REALITY CHECK.

ON THE WATER IS
MUCH DIFFERENT
THAN BEING
UNDER.

WHEN I WAS
SIXTEEN, I WENT
SCUBA DIVING
FOR THE FIRST TIME.

MY INSTRUCTOR
HAD ABOUT EIGHT
OF US IN THE CLASS
ON THE FIRST DAY
AND WAS SHOWING US
VERY BASIC SKILLS
LIKE HOW TO CLEAR
THE REGULATOR AND
HOW TO KISS YOUR
MASK.

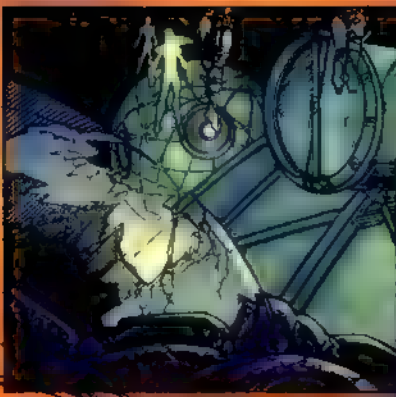
HE WASN'T
BUSY WITH BUBBLES
OF THE OTHERS.
I DECIDED TO GIVE
A TRY ON MY
OWN. I NEVER
HAD THE TIME TO
HAVE A SCUBA
DIVER.

WITH ALL MY
EARS, I JUMPED
OFF THE BOAT
AND WENT STRAIGHT
TO THE BOTTOM.
WE WERE
ONLY IN ABOUT 10 FEET
OF WATER BUT I COULD
SO MUCH MORE IN
THE WATER.

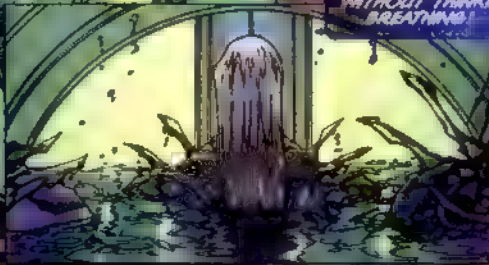
AT FIRST IT
WAS INCREDIBLE.

I WAS SWIMMING
ALONG THE SIDE OF
A REEF THOUSANDS
OF FEET
PARTING.

I WAS JUST
GETTING COMFORTABLE
WHEN I NOTICED
SOMETHING STRANGE.



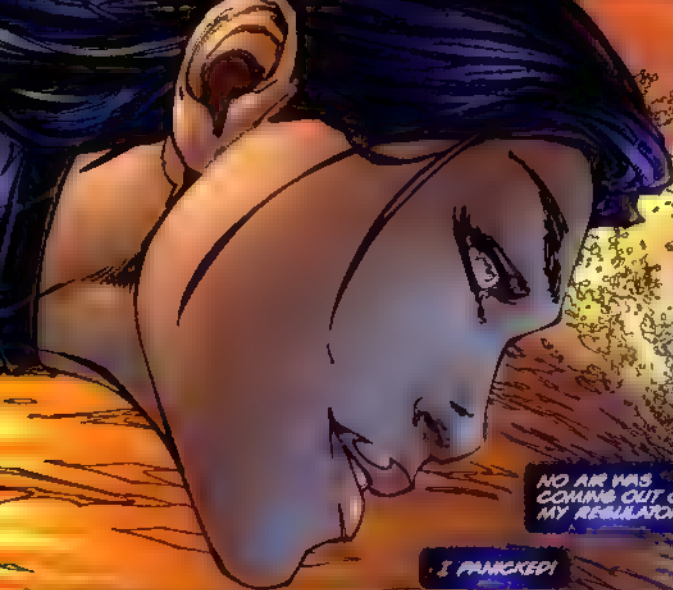
I HAD BEEN HOLDING
MY BREATH THE WHOLE TIME.



I HAD BEEN DOWN
FOR AROUND FOUR MINUTES
WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT
BREATHING!

ONCE I REALIZED
THIS I LET OUT THE
AIR AND TRIED TO
BREATHE.

I COULDN'T...



NO AIR WAS
COMING OUT OF
MY REGULATOR!

I PANICKED!

I LOOKED UP
BUT THE BOAT
WAS GONE...

MY LIMBS WERE
KILLING ME AND I
TRIED TO SWIM FOR
THE SURFACE.

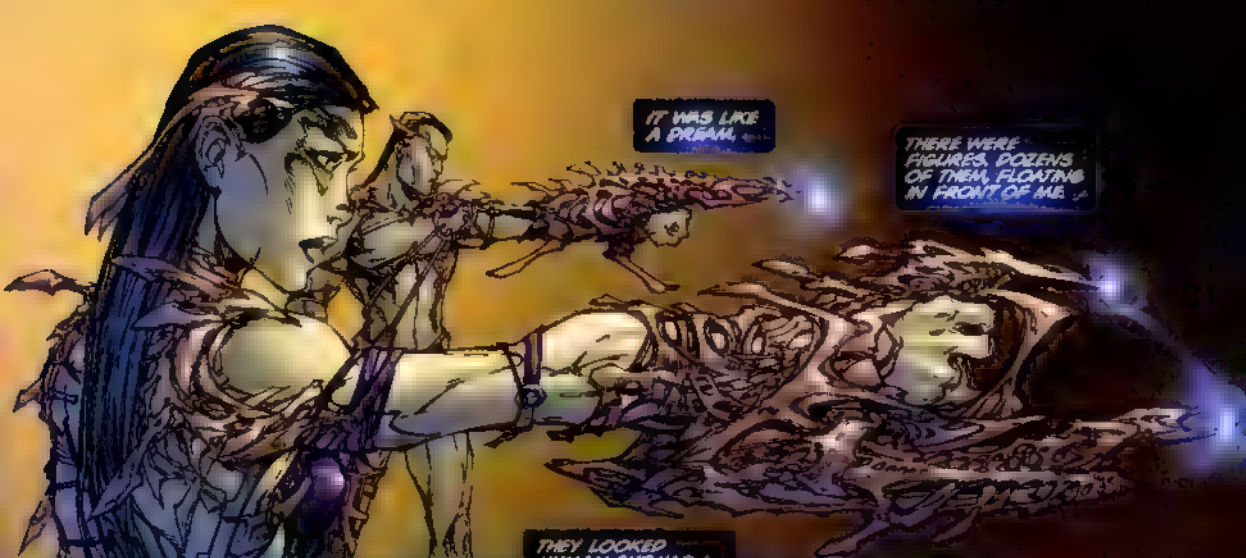
I GOT ABOUT
30 FEET UP AND
MY BODY WENT
NUMB.



I MUST'VE TAKEN
IN A GALLON OF
WATER WHEN I LOST
CONSCIOUSNESS.

THAT WAS WHEN
I SAW THEM FOR
THE FIRST TIME...

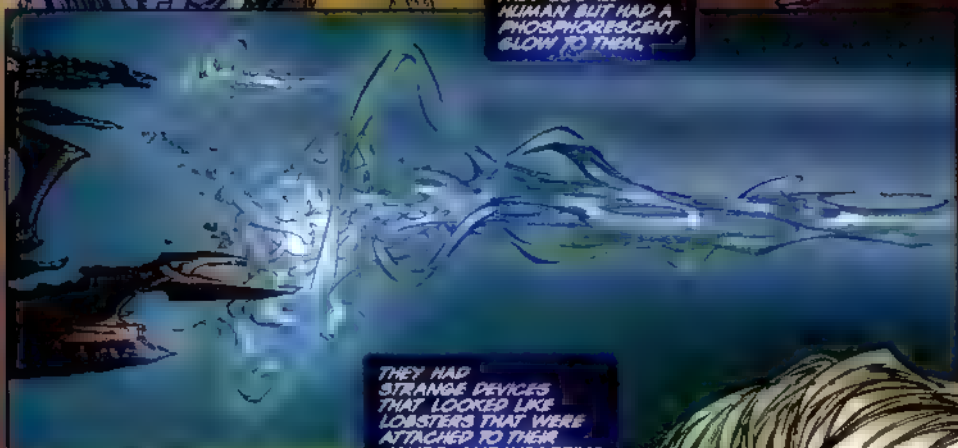




IT WAS LIKE
A DREAM.

THERE WERE
FIGURES, DOZENS
OF THEM, FLOATING
IN FRONT OF ME.

THEY LOOKED
HUMAN, BUT HAD A
PHOSPHORESCENT
GLOW TO THEM.



THEY HAD
STRANGE DEVICES
THAT LOOKED LIKE
LOBSTERS THAT WERE
ATTACHED TO THEIR
HANDS, AND WRAPPING
AROUND THEIR HEAD
AND BODY.



THE FIGURES
JUST FLOATED THERE,
STARING AT ME.

THEY DIDN'T
LOOK DANGEROUS.



ONE OF THE FIGURES CAME FORWARD.

HE WAS BEAUTIFUL, WITH LONG FLOWING HAIR AND HYPNOTIC EYES. HE PUT HIS HANDS OUT AND THE WATER STARTED TO BLOW IN FRONT OF HIM.

I STARTED TWINKLING.

A WARM FIRE BEGAN TO EMANATE FROM MY BODY. THE FIGURE LOOKED AT ME AND SMILED.

AH.

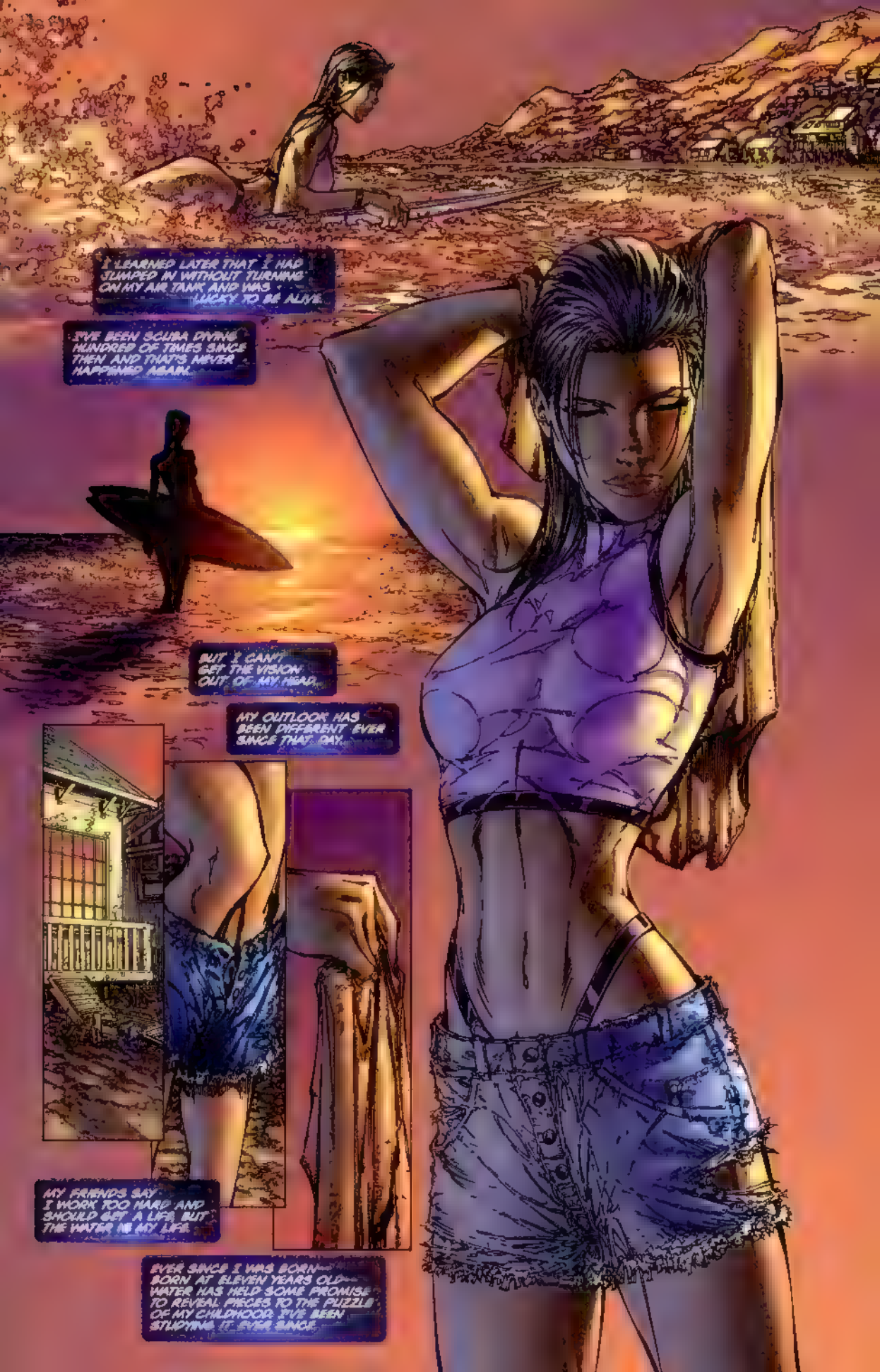
HE SUDDENLY CAME FORWARD AND GRABBED ME. HIS FACE CHANGED TO THAT OF MY INSTRUCTOR. HE WAS DRAGGING ME TOWARD THE SURFACE.

I WAS FLIT ON THE BACK OF THE DIVE BOAT. THE OTHER DIVERS IN THE CLASS CIRCLED AROUND ME AND WERE CRYING. WHILE THE INSTRUCTOR WAS BLOWING INTO MY MOUTH, I TRIED TO SPEAK BUT NOTHING WORKED.

AFTER ABOUT 30 SECONDS, I SPIT OUT SOME WATER AND COULD FEEL MY BODY AGAIN. THEY TOOK THE BOAT TO SHORE AND SAID I NEEDED TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL.

BUT I ACTUALLY FELT OK.





I LEARNED LATER THAT I HAD
JUMPED IN WITHOUT TURNING
ON MY AIR TANK AND WAS
LUCKY TO BE ALIVE.

I'VE BEEN SCUBA DIVING
HUNDRED OF TIMES SINCE
THEN, AND THAT'S NEVER
HAPPENED AGAIN.

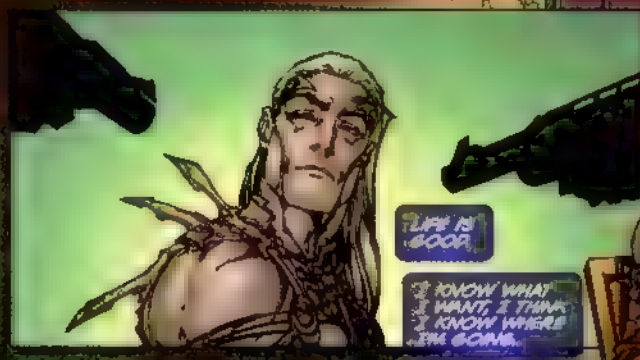
BUT I CAN'T
GET THE VISION
OUT OF MY HEAD.

MY OUTLOOK HAS
BEEN DIFFERENT EVER
SINCE THAT DAY.



MY FRIENDS SAY
I WORK TOO HARD AND
SHOULD GET A LIFE, BUT
THE WATER IS MY LIFE.

EVER SINCE I WAS BORN
BORN AT ELEVEN YEARS OLD
WATER HAS HELD SOME PROMISE
TO REVEAL PIECES TO THE PUZZLE
OF MY CHILDHOOD. I'VE BEEN
STUDYING IT EVER SINCE.



LIFE IS GOOD

I KNOW WHAT I WANT, I THINK I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING

AND NOW

THE LETTER I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR FOR THREE MONTHS!



THEY ACTUALLY WANT ME

ME!



DMD INC. IS FORMALLY INVITING ME TO THEIR DEEP-WATER HABITAT. THEY HAVE MADE SOME INCREDIBLE DISCOVERIES AND I'VE BEEN REQUESTED BY THEIR TOP PEOPLE TO ASSIST WITH THE RESEARCH.

I AM ACTUALLY GOING... IN EIGHT WEEKS!



THE WORLD BENEATH THE SURFACE WILL BE MINE TO EXPERIENCE!

AND WITH IT, NEW DISCOVERIES THAT MAY CHANGE MY LIFE FOREVER.

I CAN FEEL IT!





From

the

depths

they

For

DIRECT SALES



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For
JIM VAUGHAN
president

11/10/01



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BOARD THE SPELINKER,
SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC
SOMEWHERE DEEP SCARY AND
FAR AWAY FROM NORMALITY.

BIG MOE HAS THE
APPETITE OF A DOZEN
WHALES AND EATS WITH THE
BLOODY TEST OF A ROGUE
GREAT WHITE AYE. NO
GREATER MENACE LIVES, AND
WHILE I LIVE I SWEAR I
SHALL ~~UNTHWART~~
HIDE!

"BIG MOE?"

I'VE BEEN
CHASING HER HIGH UPON
THREE HUNDRED YEARS AND
IN THAT TIME I'VE BURIED BUT
ONE WEE NEEDLE IN HER LEEWARD
FIN. SHE LAUGHS AT ME, I TELL
YOU SHE LAUGHS AND LEADS
ME ON TO THE CHASE, ALWAYS
ONE STEP AHEAD WHERE I
CAN SEE HER BUT CAN'T
GET HER

THREE
HUNDRED?
YOU'RE KIDDING
ME, RIGHT? THAT
THING I SAW WAS
HARDLY MORE THAN
A MUTANT KILLER
WHALE--

A KILLER
WHALE?? ARE YE
DAFT? BIG MOE COULD
FIT A HUNDRED KILLER
WHALES IN HER BELLY, THEN
BREAK APART THE
SPELINKER TO USE FOR
FERTILIZERS!

REALLY?
WELL, I DON'T
SEE ANYTHING
OUT THERE

OH SHE'S OUT
THERE, ALL RIGHT
SHE'S OUT THERE AND
SHE'S ~~SIZING US UP~~
THIS VERY
MINUTE

IF YOU SAY
SO, YOU KNOW
YOU STILL HAVEN'T
TOLD ME YOUR
NAME

MY NAME?
MY GOODNESS
YOU'RE RIGHT!
MY NAME'S

UH

I CAN'T
REMEMBER MY
NAME JUST CALL
ME BABA

AND NOW
MISSY THE TIME
HAS COME FOR YOU
TO LEARN TO DRIVE
THE SPELINKER, SHE'S
AN EASY GAL TO
MASTER HERE'S
WHAT YOU DO--

CAN'T
REMEMBER
YOUR NAME?

LOON!

--THIS PULLEY CONTROLS THE FORWARD TOWERS. PULL IT DOWN TO ROLL AND UP TO RELEASE. USE THIS VALVE HERE TO CRANK THE MAINS EAST-WEST. USE THIS PULLEY TO LIFT IT FOR MORE OR LESS LIFT. THESE PULLEYS OVER HERE CONTROL THE RUDDER, WHICH IS MADE FROM THE HARDENED FLESH OF BIG MOE HERSELF.

OH--UH, THAT'S A LITTLE SECRET WE'LL KEEP BETWEEN OURSELVES, OKAY?

WHERE WAS IT?

SOMETHING ABOUT A PULLEY.

RIGHT! USE THIS VALVE TO SET THE THROUST AND COUNTERTHROUST AND THIS LEVER TO CONTROL THE ACTIVE THROUST. COUNTERMANGER NEVER EVER EVER EVER PRESS THIS BUTTON. NEVER. NO NO NO!

NEVER! EXCEPT LATER UH.

OKAY USE THIS PULLEY TO ACTIVATE THIS LEVER WHICH WILL ALLOW THE SPELUNKER TO MANEUVER REVERSE THAT FOR HORIZONTAL CONTROL.

OKAY OVER HERE WE HAVE THE MAGNETIC FOLD DRIVE MECHANISM AND OVER HERE THE FISH FINDER. THE MAGNETIC FOLD DRIVE WORKS AS STANDARD MEANING THAT THIS LEVER HERE ENABLES THE MAGNETS AND THIS VALVE HERE CONTROLS THE PULSES. ALWAYS REMEMBER THE FOLD DRIVE. ADJUSTING THE MAGNETS WE WOULDN'T WANT TO TURN NORTH INTO SOUTH.

NOW WE'LL GET

THE FISH FINDER IS AS YOU'VE PROBABLY GUESSED A STANDARD RALLY/BORGENSEN FINDER. IN WITH THE OPTIONAL LATE-FOR-BAIT MODIFICATION PACKAGE, OF COURSE. I HAVE ADDED MY OWN FURTHER CUSTOMIZATIONS. USE THIS VALVE FOR PRESSURE. THIS LEVER FOR DEPTH. THIS LEVER FOR SENSITIVITY. AND THIS PULLEY OVER HERE FOR FINE ADJUSTMENT.

LASTLY WHEN THE TIME COMES, RUN THIS PULLEY UP SIX AND ONE HALF PULSES ADJUST THIS VALVE UNTIL YOU HEAR STEAM COMING FROM THE REAR GASOLINE AND PUSH THIS BUTTON HERE. THIS BUTTON HERE REPEATEDLY GOT A LOT.

THAT'S ALL THE SPELUNKER WILL DO ALL THE REST HERSELF.

ALL THE REST REALLY?

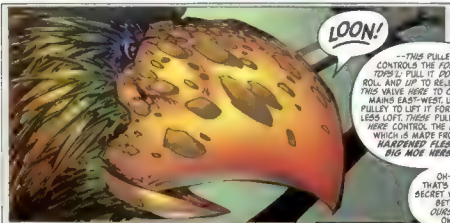
NOW THEN WE CAN'T HAVE YOU CHANGING THE MICE WITHOUT SOME PROTECTION. CAN WE? WHAT HAVE I GOT IN HERE?

AND GOOD! PUT THEM IN.

AND YOUR YES?

AND UNWRAPPED YOU NEED GRAPNELS!

THAT'S THE PROTECTOR! HOW DO YOU FEEL?





INVINCIBLE.
IF NOT
STRONGER.

LOON!



I EXPECTED NO LESS
NOW, THE FINDER SAYS B-G MOE
S FOUR POINTS TO PORT AND JUST
A FEW KICKS FROM DEAD MEAT
I'LL MAN THE HARPOON
YOU'RE DRIVING

WAIT

I'M
DRIVING?

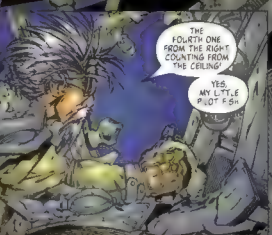
YOU'RE
DOING GREAT!
WHAT DOES THE FISH
FINDER SAY HER
DISTANCE IS?

JOHN

NEVER
MIND! THAT SHE
GOES! NO NO, WAIT! IT'S ONE
OF HER DAMN COMPANIONS, BUT
HE'LL LEAD US RIGHT TO HER!
STEER FOURTEEN DEGREES
STARBOARD!

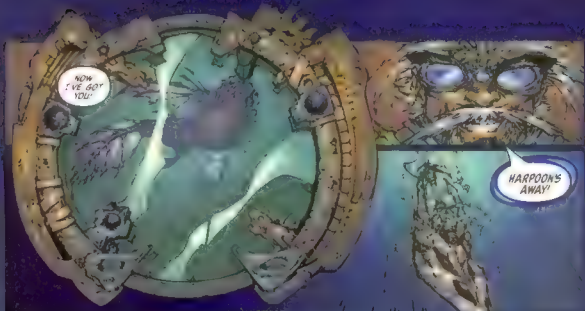


I DON'T
KNOW WHICH
PULLEY TO
GRAB



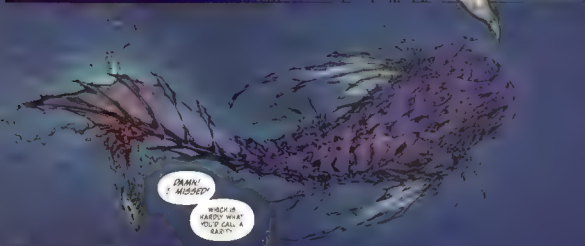
THE
FOURTH ONE
FROM THE RIGHT
COUNTING FROM
THE CEILING

YES,
MY LITTLE
PILOT FISH



NOW
I'VE GOT
YOU!

HARPOON'S
AWAY!



DAMN!
I MISSED!

WHICH IS
HARDLY WHAT
YOU'D CALL A
KASTY!



YOU LOOK OUT
AHEAD! LAND HO,
OR SOMETHING!

THAT
SHE GOES
BIG NICE AT
LAST!

DID YOU HEAR
ME!! THERE'S
SOMETHING IN FRONT
OF US! WE'RE
GONNA HIT IT!



NO, LASSIE
WE'RE GONNA
SHOWER IT.



THAT'S
BIG MOE?

OF COURSE
IT IS! YOU NEED
TO LISTEN WHEN I
TALK TO YOU,
LASSIE! NOW HOLD
US STEADY

AND WHEN
I GIVE THE WORD
PULL US HARD
A PORT

STEADY

NOW!

I SAID PORT!
PORT! THE
OTHER WAY!

NO.
NO. NO!

THE OTHER
PULLEY!

YOU
JAZZY COOT
THERE'S A
MILLION PULLEYS
IN HERE

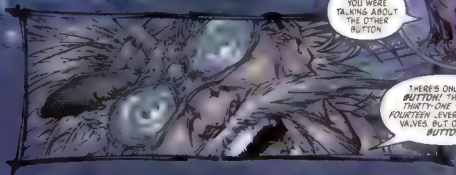
YOU KNOW
WHAT? IT'S
BUTTON
TIME!





WHY DO I
THINK THIS IS
VERY BAD?

BECAUSE IT IS
BAD YOU NITWIT?
'YOU'VE RESET THE MAIN
DRIVE SYSTEM! WE'RE
DEAD IN THE WATER! YOU
PRESSED THE BUTTON I
SAID NEVER TO
PRESS!



I THOUGHT
YOU WERE
TALKING ABOUT
THE OTHER
BUTTON

THERE'S ONLY **ONE**
BUTTON! THERE ARE
THIRTY-ONE PULLEYS,
FOURTEEN LEVERS, AND SIX
VALVES, BUT ONLY **ONE**
BUTTON!

YOU
SAID WHEN
THE TIME
COMES

THE TIME
HASN'T COME YET
GET OUT OF THE
WAY! I'M TAKING
CONTROL



THAT'S
PROBABLY THE
BEST IDEA



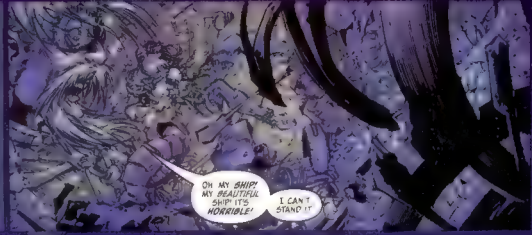
AND I CAN'T DO
ANYTHING WITHOUT
POWER! WE'LL NEVER
RESET IN TIME!

LET ME TELL
YOU WHAT
YOU'VE DONE
LASSIE.

"THROUGH ALL THE
CENTURIES, IN ALL THE
OCEANS, BIG MOE HAS
NEVER

HAD ME SO
COMPLETELY

AT HER
MERCY



OH MY SHIP!
MY BEAUTIFUL
SHIP! IT'S
HORRIBLE!

I CAN'T
STAND IT



LOON!
LOON!

YOU GOT
THAT RIGHT
T.T.F. GUY

OH GOODNESS
GRACIOUS! WHAT'S
HAPPENING?!

WHERE
ARE WE MISS?
PLEASE, PLEASE! TELL ME
WE'RE NOT ABOARD THAT
HORRID VESSEL THE
SPELUNKER?

WHAT?
DON'T YOU DARE
WIG OUT ON ME
NOW! YOU'VE GOT
TO GET THE BOAT
WORKING!

P- BUT I DON'T
KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT BOATS!

YES YOU DO!
YOU BROUGHT ME
HERE! YOU SHOWED ME
THESE WACKY CONTROLS
YOU KNOW HOW TO
MAKE IT WORK!

MISS,
I TOLD YOU
I HAVEN'T BEEN
ABOARD A BOAT SINCE
BIG MOE SMASHED THE
SPELUNKER BOATS
GIVE ME HIVES

HIVES?
HIVES? IF YOU
DON'T SNAP OUT OF
IT YOU AND YOUR
HIVES ARE GOING TO
BE EATEN, YOU
NUTCASE!

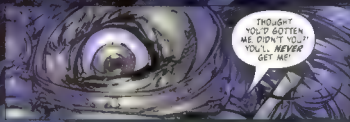
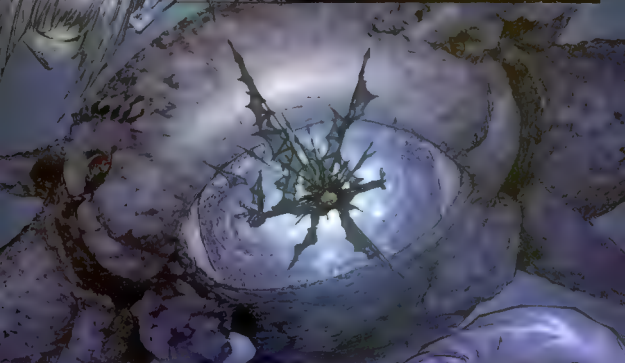


WHO?
WHERE? WHAT'S
BECOME OF MY
SHIP?

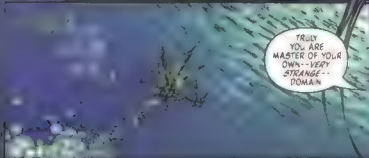
WE'RE DEAD
IN THE WATER
AND BIG MOES
CHEWING ON
US.

I TOLD YOU WHAT TO
DO WHEN THE TIME COMES
RUN THIS PULLEY SIX AND A
HALF PULLS, OPEN THE VALVE
UNTIL YOU HEAR STEAM

AND THEN
PRESS THE BUTTON
REPEATEDLY



THOUGHT
YOU'D GOTTEN
ME. DIDN'T YOU?
YOU'LL NEVER
GET ME!



TRULY
YOU ARE
MASTER OF YOUR
OWN--VERY
STRANGE--
DOMAIN

THE GARBAGE JAPEN
GNT RECHARGING--
PROBABLY A D-BLOODED POWER
COUPLING YOU'RE GOING TO
HAVE TO GET OUT THERE
AND F.X IT

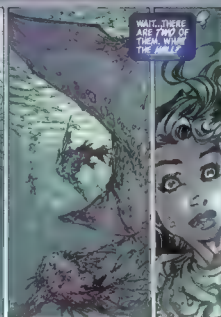
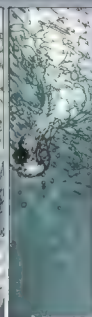
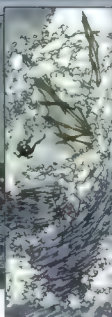
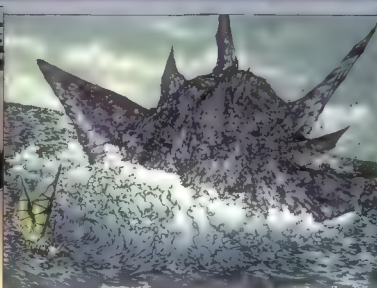
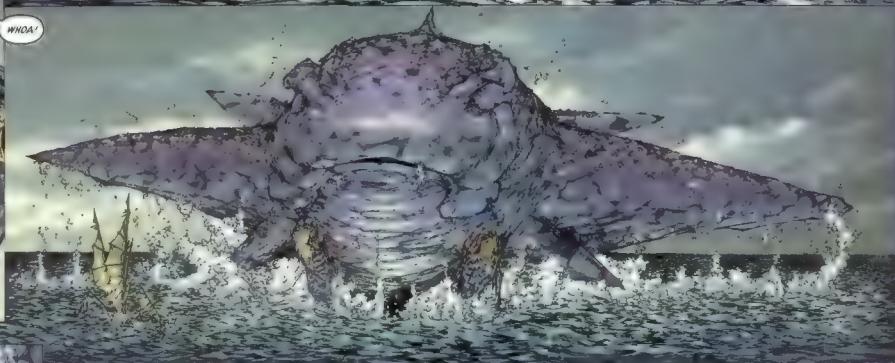
MEET
WHY ME?

BECAUSE *SOMEONE*
HADS TO DRIVE THE SPEELUNKER
AND YOU'VE ALREADY PROVEN YOU
CAN'T DO IT! THE COUPLING IS ON THE
MAIN MAST NEAR THE TOR AND HURRY--
BUT MOSES HAD HER APPETITE AND
SHE'S READY FOR THE MAIN
COURSE NOW *GG*!

THIS MUST
BE WHAT HE'S
TALKING
ABOUT

IT'S
FIXED NOW
WHAT?

WNOA!



WAIT--THERE
ARE TWO OF
THEM. WHAT
THE HELL?

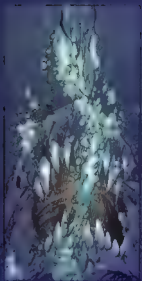
SHE DOESN'T WANT TO NOTICE THEM, AND THEY HAVE COMPLETELY MISSED THE POINT OF THE SCENE.

ARE THEY LIKE FLOT FUNK ARE TO SHARPER SOME KIND OF DRAMATIC RELATIONSHIP ALONG THEY BRING FOOD TO THE MCH. MARRAS OF THE SCENE.

WOW, FOOD LINE

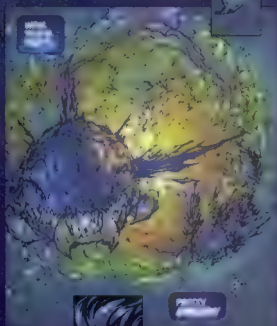
DRAGON LINE





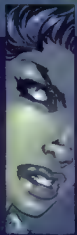
WHAT'S THE
BIG DEAL?

GET A PUMP
UP YOUR
PUMP



THE
BIG
PUMP

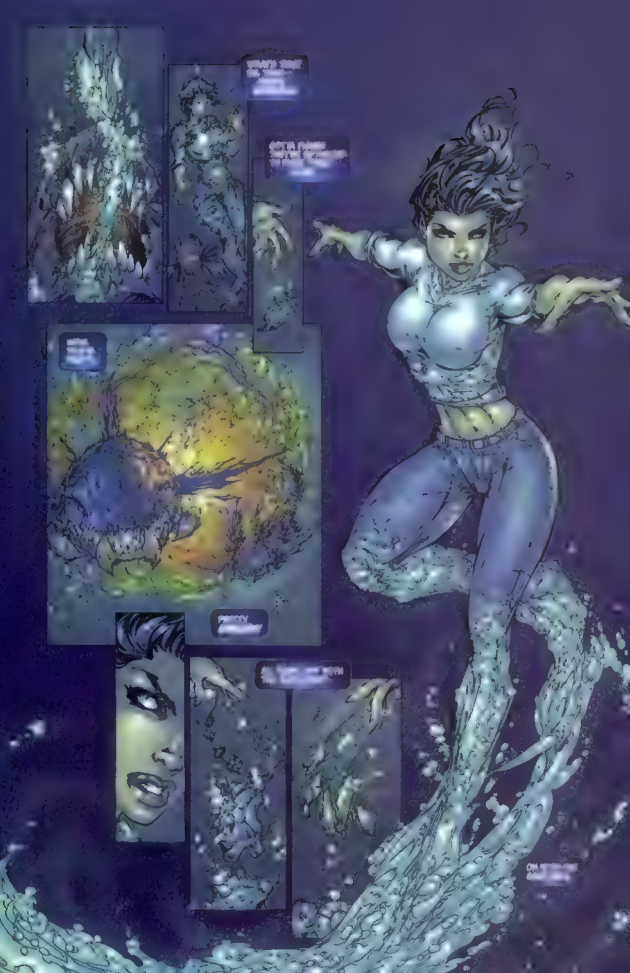
THE
BIG
PUMP



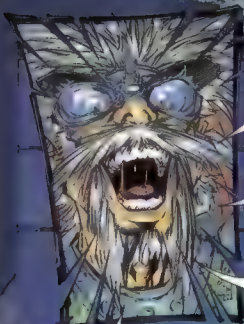
THE
BIG
PUMP



ON
THE
PUMP



ALL STORIES OF YOU HAVE
BEEN TOLD AS A HIT HOME
YOUR NAME IS A HIT HOME
YOUR NAME IS A HIT HOME
YOUR NAME IS A HIT HOME



AND
NOW...

YOU'RE

...MINE!

THE BARDS
WILL SING OF THIS
FOR CENTURIES! BIG
MOE BROUGHT DOWN
BY THE MIGHTY
UH

WHAT'S
MY NAME
AGAIN?



WE'VE NO
DOUBT
YOU'VE
BEEN
HERE

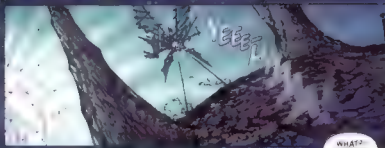
WELL



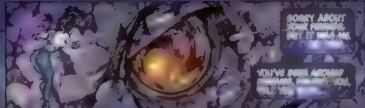
BUT
SOME
YOU



YOU'RE NOT
LEAVING ME
MUCH OF
A CHOICE



OIL NO. NOW
I'M HEAVY
AND I'M
THE ONLY
ONE



SORRY ABOUT
THE WAY I
TALKED TO
YOU

YOU'VE BEEN AROUND
FOR A LONG TIME
AND YOU'VE BEEN
A GOOD FRIEND



CONSIDERING
HOW MUCH YOU
I'VE BEEN AROUND
FOR A LONG TIME
AND YOU'VE BEEN
A GOOD FRIEND



HEY!

AHOY
LASSE, LOOK
HERE!



LOOK WHAT I FOUND EMBEDDED IN THE REAR DECK! ONE OF HER **TEETH!** NOT QUITE HER HEAD MOUNTED ON MY WALL, BUT A WONDERFUL ADDITION TO THE SPELUNKER NONETHELESS.

AND, COME TO THINK TO IT I'VE NOT YET SEEN THE WALL ON WHICH I COULD MOUNT HER HEAD. I'LL HAVE TO PONDER THAT.

WELL, LASSIE, I ADMIT I HAD SUCH HIGH HOPES FOR YOU, BUT YOU'RE JUST NOT GOING TO DO. I NEED A MATE I CAN COUNT ON. NO OFFENSE TAKEN. I HOPE.

NOT AT ALL.

GOOD. CAN I GIVE YOU A LIFT HOME?

NO! NO, UN, IT'S A FINE DAY. I'D ~~BEHOLD THE POWER~~

OF COURSE YOU WOULD! THEN WITH THAT I'M OFF AFTER BIG MOE. GOOD LUCK TO YOU, LASSIE!

WHAT? WHERE AM I?

WHY I'M RIGHT HERE OF COURSE. WAIT, WHAT'S THIS PULLEY DO ~~REAR?~~

WELL, AFTER ALL THIS, MY BIG QUESTION IS...

...AM I ALWAYS GOING TO BE THE ~~ONLY~~ **ONLY** PEOPLE OF THE ~~WORLD~~ **WORLD**?

LOON!





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P

ASPENS THE KEY. SHE LEARNED MORE IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS—ABOUT HERSELF AND HER HERITAGE—THAN SHE EVER IMAGINED WAS POSSIBLE.

PICTURE BEING AWAKENED TO A NEW REALITY ENTIRELY, THEN LEARNING THAT *THAT* REALITY WAS A DISTORTION OF A *THIRD* REALITY, WHICH IS THE ACTUAL REALITY.

AND THEN PICTURE ARRIVING IN THIS *THIRD* REALITY ABLE TO DO THINGS COMPLETELY UNEXPLAINED BY YOUR OWN ACCEPTED PHYSICAL LAWS. IT HAD TO HAVE BEEN A SHOCK.

THROUGH IT ALL, SHE DISPLAYED AN ASTONISHING ABILITY TO ADAPT TO THOSE KINDS OF UPHEAVALS. SHE TOOK IT IN STRIDE, MORE OR LESS. OR AT LEAST, IT SEEMED THAT WAY TO ME. SHE'D PROBABLY TELL YOU DIFFERENTLY.

BEFORE ALL THIS HAPPENED, SHE WAS SCHOOLLED AS A BIOLOGIST. LATELY SHE'S BEEN WORKING WITH THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, RESEARCHING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE BLUE SUN AND THE REAPPEARANCE OF EXTINCT SPECIES.

THE THING IS, SHE KNOWS A LOT MORE ABOUT THAT CORRELATION THAN SHE CAN LET ON TO HER FELLOW SCIENTISTS, SO SHE'S DELICATELY BALANCING GENUINE RESEARCH WITH A HEALTHY AMOUNT OF MISINFORMATION.

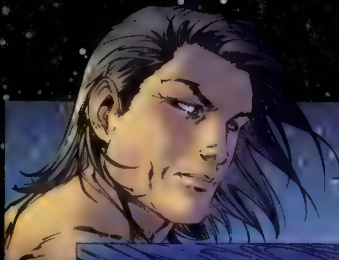
AS A SCIENTIST, SHE OBJECTED TO A LESS-THAN-TOTAL COMMITMENT TO FINDING THE TRUTH, BUT AS I POINTED OUT TO HER, IT'S CRITICAL THAT—FOR THE TIME BEING—SHE KEEPS THE HUMAN WORLD FROM DIGGING TOO DEEP TOO QUICK.

THEY'RE NOT READY TO FIND WHAT'S WAITING FOR THEM.

THE FACT THAT SHE'S WILLING TO DO THAT SAYS EVERYTHING. I'M GLAD TO SAY SHE'S STARTING TO TAKE THINGS MORE SERIOUSLY.



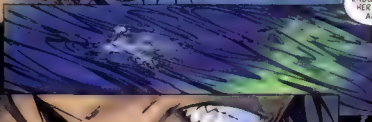
YEAHHH
BABY



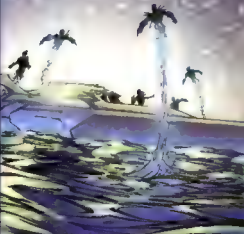
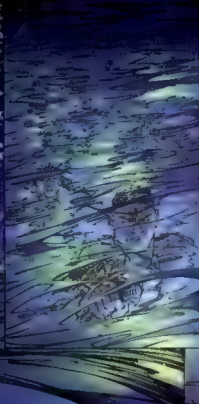
YEAH
ASPEN'S THE KEY SHE'S
GOT THE POTENTIAL TO LEAD
OUR PEOPLE AND IF SHE
CONTINUES TO DEVELOP THE WAY
SHE HAS, WITH HER UNIQUE
HERITAGE, WELL--

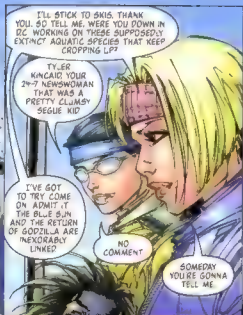
--SHE COULD
QUITE LITERALLY
UNITE THE
WORLD

LISTEN,
ENOUGH ABOUT
HER, TELL ME
ABOUT



AFF





THIS WHOLE SNOWBOARDING THING IS UNBELIEVABLE! I SAW THIS SHOW A WHILE BACK ABOUT THE GUY WHO INVENTED IT. HE SAID IT CAME ABOUT BECAUSE HE WANTED TO SURF A MOUNTAIN. HIS FRIENDS WERE TELLING HIM HE WAS CRAZY...

I'LL TELL YOU, HE DEFINITELY WAS CRAZY, BUT COOL CRAZY.

I'LL STICK TO SKIS, THANK YOU. SO TELL ME, WERE YOU DOWN IN DC WORKING ON THESE SUPPOSEDLY EXTINCT AQUATIC SPECIES THAT KEEP CROPPING UP?

TYLER KINCAID YOUR 24-7 NEWSWOMAN THAT WAS A PRETTY CLUMSY SEGUE KID

I'VE GOT TO TRY COME ON, ADMIT IT THE BLUE SUN AND THE RETURN OF GODZILLA ARE INEXORABLY LINKED

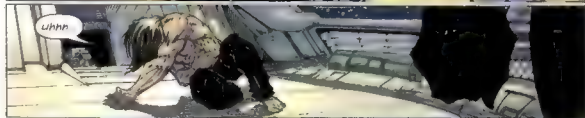
NO COMMENT

SOMEDAY YOU'RE GONNA TELL ME

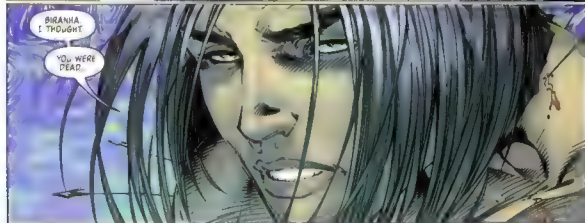


IT'S CLASSIFIED TYLER, YOU KNOW WHAT "CLASSIFIED" MEANS? IT MEANS "SECRET," AS IN "DON'T TELL ANYONE"

IN ALL SERIOUSNESS, EVEN IF I HAD SOMETHING INTERESTING TO TELL YOU--WHICH I DON'T--I WOULDN'T I DON'T WANT YOU SCARING THE HELL OUT OF THE WORLD WITH THINGS THAT MIGHT HAPPEN.



UHMM



BRANHA I THOUGHT

YOU WERE DEAD.



AND
IT WAS CONVENIENT
TO LET YOU CONTINUE
THINKING IT

THANK YOU, BY THE
WAY, FOR SAVING US THE
TROUBLE OF TAKING KILLIAN
DOWN. SELF-IMPORTANT DIOT
THAT HE WAS, HE STILL WOULD
HAVE TIED UP VALUABLE
RESOURCES

OH YES WE
KNOW ALL
ABOUT KILLIAN
SURPRISED?

NO TARAN
PLAYING BOTH
SIDES

IT HURTS, DOESN'T IT?
TRYING TO TURN TO WATER
WITH ALL THAT POISON IN
YOUR VEINS?

KILL

NO, UNFORTUNATELY
THE POISON WON'T KILL YOU.
I DESIGNED IT TO COUNTERACT
YOUR NATURAL ABILITIES. IS
ALL MAKE YOU DOCILE
AND TO HURT

WE'RE
DONE HERE

ON TO
THE FEMALE



HEY, ASPEN! WATCH THIS!



WHOA
HEY!

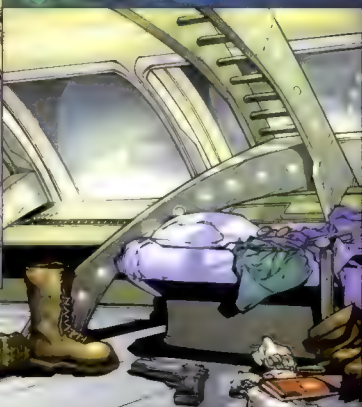


OOF!

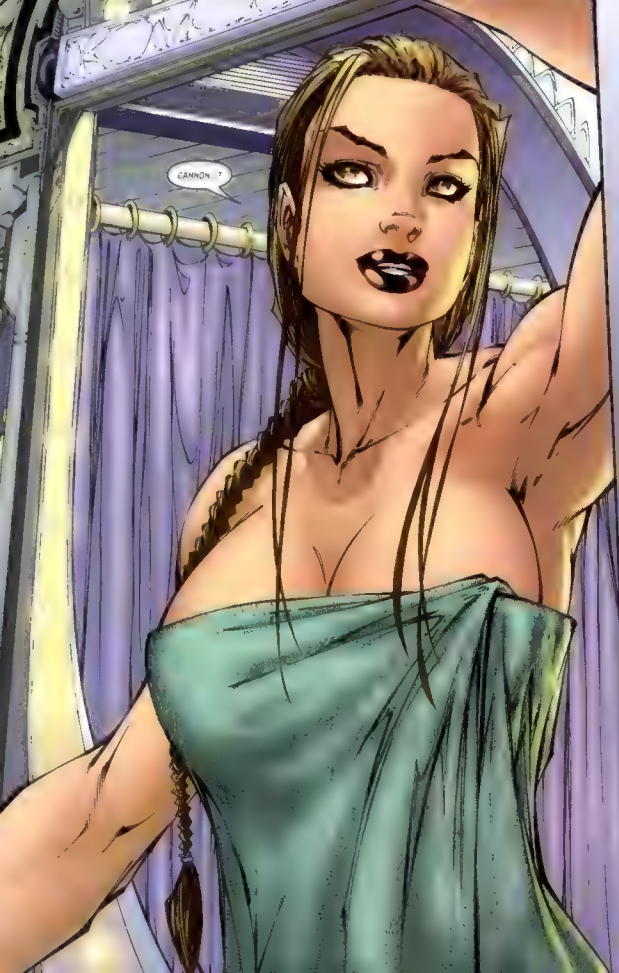
CRASH!

OHH!

CRASH!



6





**EVERYONE KNOWS WHAT RIGHT
AND WRONG ARE**

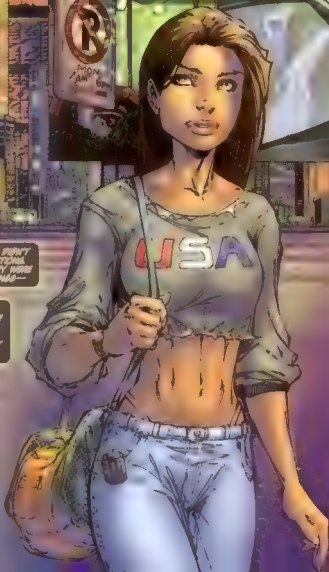
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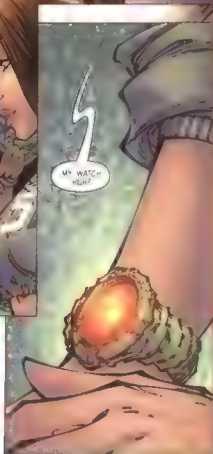
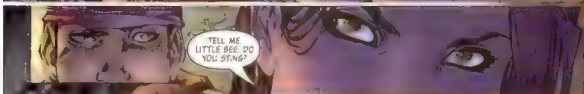
—NO ONE KNOWS WHERE I AM NO
ONE CALLS ME NO ONE CARES
AND I'M TIRED OF BEING ALONE
WHO'S SILENT FOR A LONG TIME
TO CHANGE TO A NEW PLACE LET
ANYONE TELL ME IT'S THE SAME

OF THE
FEDERAL
BUREAU OF
INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

...the ...

4443





WHAT I WISH THAT OTHER COPS DON'T...

...IS CALLED
THE WITCHBLADE.

YOU
MEAN THIS
WATCH?

YAAAAHHH!

HOLY CHRIST!
GOD HELP ME!
PLEASE, NO!

IT'S AN ANCIENT
SYMBIOTIC ENTITY THAT
CHOSE ME AS ITS HOST.

LATELY THE WITCHBLADE'S
BLOODLUST IS GETTING MORE
INTENSE. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY
THAT IS, BUT IT'S HARDER TO STAY
MORE AND MORE BURNING IN ORDER
TO KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL.

UNHHH

ALL
RIGHT,
A-READY
LET ME
GET TO A
PHONE

AS FOR
YOU

- CHASE YOUR DREAMS
IT'S NOT TOO
LATE



HOW'RE
YOU FEELING?

PICTURE
SANTA CLAUS ON
DECEMBER 26TH NOW
PICTURE HIM ON THE 26TH
AFTER RUDOLPH PITCHED HIM
OUT OF THE SLEIGH AND
DONNER AND BLITZEN TAP
DANCED ON HIS SLAVE
DRIVING ASS

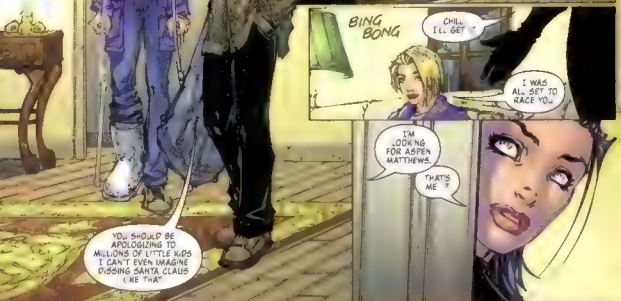
OOOKAY
THEN SOMEONE
NEEDS SOME
PAINKILLERS



SORRY
ASPEN I WAS
HOPING WE'D MAKE
YOUR FIRST NIGHT IN
NEW YORK A LITTLE
MORE EXCITING
THAN THIS

YOU KNOW, THIS SHOW'S
KIND OF FUNNY, BUT COME ON
HOW CAN THESE LAZY SLOBS
WITHOUT ANY VISIBLE MEANS OF
SUPPORT LIVE IN A MILLION
DOLLAR APARTMENT?

IT'S CALLED
SUSPENSION OF
DISBELIEF ASPEN
GIVE IT A TRY



BING
BONG

CHILL
I'LL GET IT

I WAS
ALL SET TO
RACE YOU

I'M
LOOKING
FOR ASPEN
MATTHEWS

THAT'S
ME?

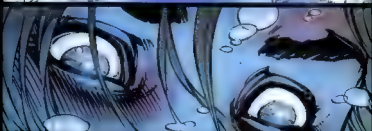
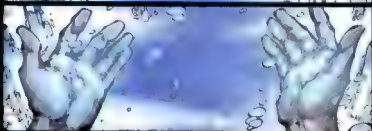
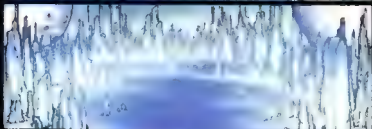
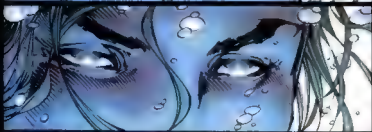
YOU SHOULD BE
APOLOGIZING TO
MILLIONS OF LITTLE KIDS
I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE
DISSING SANTA CLAUS
LIKE THAT



I'M SARA PEZZINI.
WITH THE NYPD CAN
WE TALK? YOU'RE IN
[REDACTED]

NO, NO. I'M ON
VACATION. YOU'VE GOT
THE WRONG ASPEN
MATTHEWS.

I DON'T
THINK SO.
CANNON HAWKE
SENT ME.



JANNON
YOU NEVER
DISAPPOINT
ME



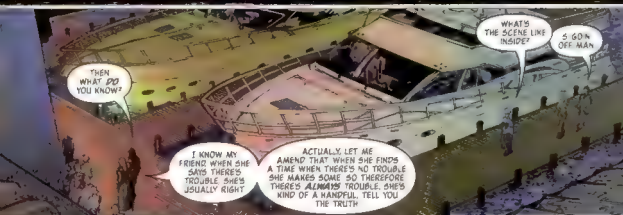
BUT CANNON'S A
FELT WATT HERE, ARE
HIS FRIEND WHO'S ALSO
YOUR FRIEND SENT YOU TO
GET ME WHERE THE
HELL'S CANNON?



I DON'T
KNOW

THEN
HOW DID THIS
FRIEND KNOW
WHO I WAS?

DON'T
KNOW THAT
EITHER



THEN
WHAT DO
YOU KNOW?

I KNOW MY
FRIEND WHEN SHE
SAYS THERE'S
TROUBLE SHE'S
USUALLY RIGHT

ACTUALLY, LET ME
AMEND THAT WHEN SHE FINDS
A TIME WHEN THERE'S NO TROUBLE
SHE MAKES SOME SO THEREFORE
THERE'S ALWAYS TROUBLE. SHE'S
KIND OF A HANDFUL, TELL YOU
THE TRUTH

WHAT'S
THE SCENE LIKE
INSIDE?

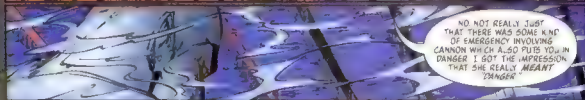
S GOIN'
OFF MAN



WELL
GOT TO MY
CANNON'S
BOAT

OH?
HOW DO YOU
KNOW?

YOU'LL
UNDERSTAND
WHEN IF YOU
MEET HIM





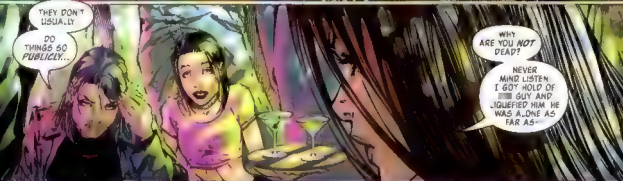




DAMN,
CHECK THAT
CHICK OUT!

COOL IT!
SHE'S THE **MAN**,
M.M.R.O.D.

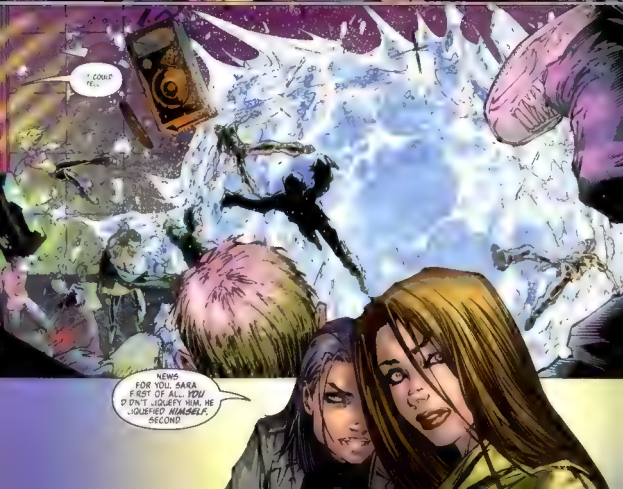
NO MORE
RED BULL FOR
ME, MAN.



THEY DON'T
USUALLY
DO
THINGS SO
PUBLICLY...

WHY
ARE YOU **NOT**
DEAD?

NEVER
MIND LISTEN
I GOT HOLD OF
THE GUY AND
JUGUEFIED HIM. HE
WAS ALONE AS
FAR AS



"COULD
YOU..."

NEWS
FOR YOU, SARA
FIRST OF ALL, YOU
D'ONT JUGUEFY HIM, HE
JUGUEFYD HIMSELF.
SECOND!



HE
WASN'T
ALONE

CONTINUE

13 \$2.50 US
FEB

PART 2 OF 3

QUEST STARRING WITCHBLADE® AND TOMB RAIDER™
TURNER · O'NEIL · TURNER · SIOAL · STEIGERWALD · DREAMER



MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



MICHAEL
TURNER
JON
SIOAL
DREAMER



09853 07w01



Font

$$P_{\text{eff}} = \frac{P_{\text{max}}}{1 + \left(\frac{P_{\text{max}}}{P_{50}} \right)^2} \quad (1)$$

Both concerned themselves (on vacation) and are set upon the icy prison to the waste reaper.

Interviewed by David Wohl

Interviewer: Talent Caldwell

John Peter Sinsgrub, M.D.



WE'LL
CANNOT.

ANY LAST
WORDS?



SO THAT
TARAS, YOUR TARAS
MY SON, MIGHT BE
RETURNED TO SOME
MANNER OF
COMPLETENESS.

I'VE SLOWLY
BEEN PULING YOUR
MOLECULAR APART,
USING YOUR ENERGY TO
RESCUATE TARAS BUT
-- IT'S VITALLY
IMPORTANT THAT YOU
KNOW THIS --

-- YOU ALONE
WON'T BE ENOUGH
TO BRING HIM BACK. FOR
THAT I'LL BE USING
YOUR LITTLE FEMALE
ACCOMPICE. SHE WON'T
SURVIVE I'M AFRAID.

OH, THAT'S
RIGHT YOU
CAN'T TALK.

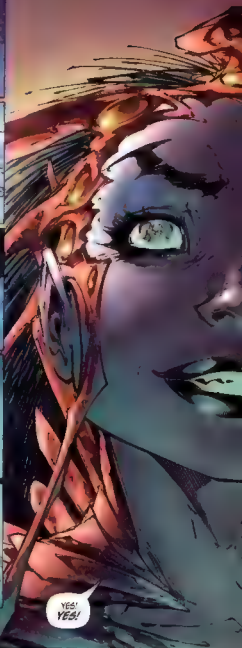
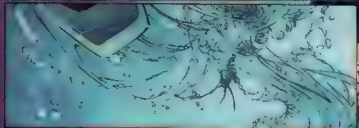
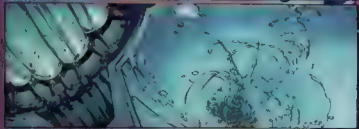
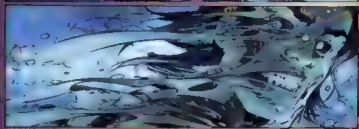
THE GREAT
CANNON WANKS
REDUCED TO
NOTHING.

BUT YOU WILL.
IN A MANNER OF
SPEAKING, YOU'LL OBTAIN
A FAINT AWARENESS OF
WHO YOU ONCE WERE.
TRAPPED WITHIN TARAS
LIKE A GHOST IN THE
PATHWAYS OF HIS
MIND.

AND ONCE YOUR
FEMALE HAS BEEN
DESTROYED AND THE
PROCESS IS COMPLETE,
YOU'LL HAVE NO HOPE OF
EVER AGAIN BEING WHO
YOU WERE.

DESPAIR
CANNON, IS ALL YOU
WILL LEFT A LONG LIFE
OF DESPAIR. MAY IT
CRUSH YOUR SOUL FOR
WHAT YOU DID TO MY
SON.





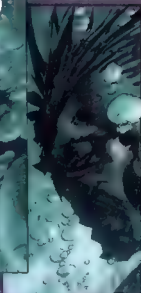
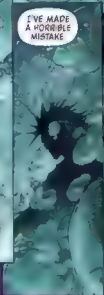


NO...



NO! WHAT'S
HAPPENED HERE?
THIS IS AN
ABOMINATION!

I'VE MADE
A HORRIBLE
MISTAKE



OH, TARAS,
MY DEAR SON,
I'VE LOST YOU
FOREVER





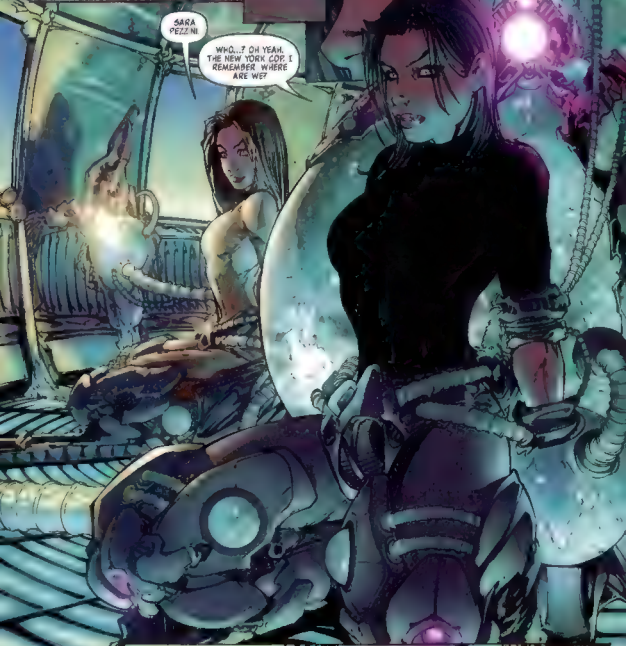
ASPEN ?



ASPEN
WAKE UP



WHAT ?
WHO ARE
YOU?

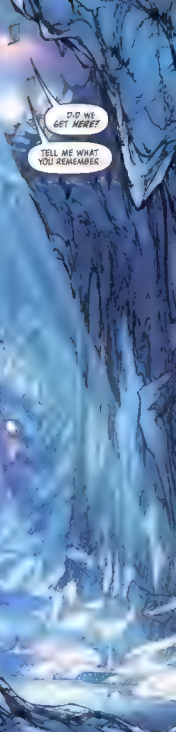


SARA
PEZZINI

WHO...? OH YEAH.
THE NEW YORK COP. I
REMEMBER WHERE
ARE WE?

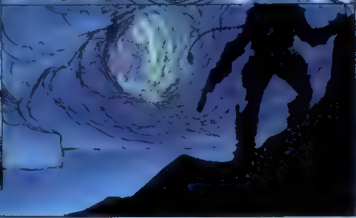


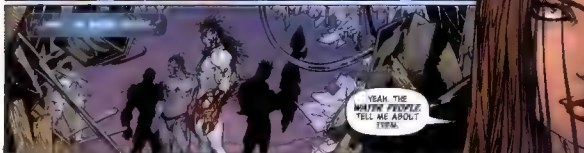
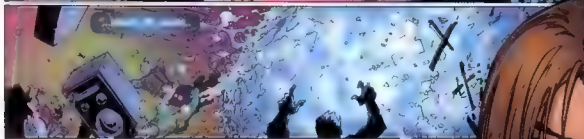
I DON'T KNOW.
UP SOME KIND OF
FROZEN CREEK

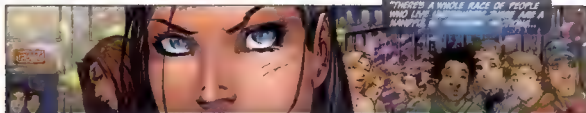


DID WE
GET HERE?

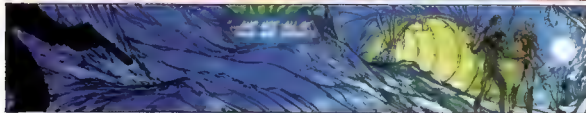
TELL ME WHAT
YOU REMEMBER







"THERE'S A WHOLE RACE OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE UNDERWATER AND A HANDFUL OF THEM..."



"I THINK OF THEM AS WATER PEOPLE... BUT THEY'RE NOT."

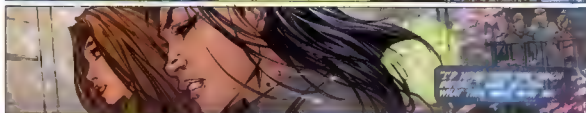


"THOUGH IT'S SOMETHING I SHOULD KNOW BECAUSE I'M ONE OF THEM."

"FOR SOME OF US IT'S AS IF WATER IS ALIVE AND WE CAN CONTROL IT. OTHERS ARE MORE LIKE... TUNING PEOPLE... EXCEPT THEY CAN BREATHE UNDERWATER."



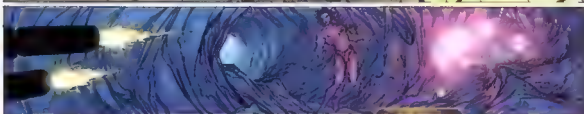
"I'M KIND OF EMBARASSED TO ADMIT IT, BUT I CAN CONTROL IT. I CAN AS MUCH AS YOU, AND AS I SHOULD."

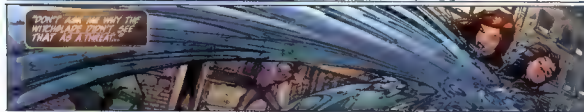
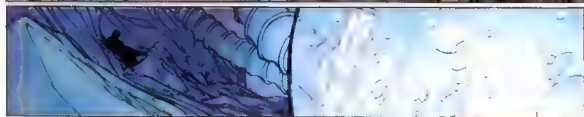
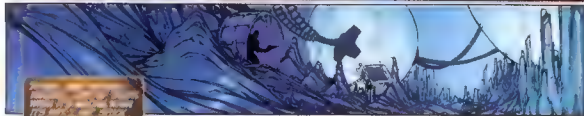


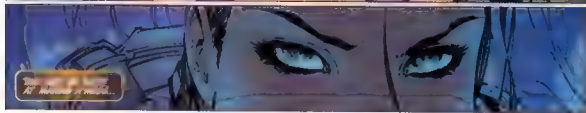
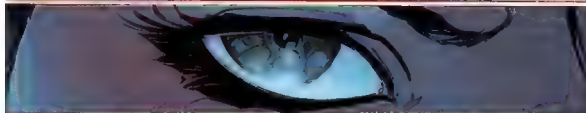
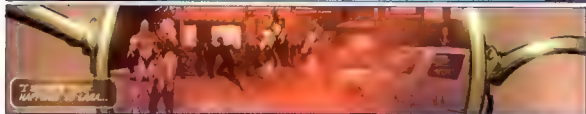
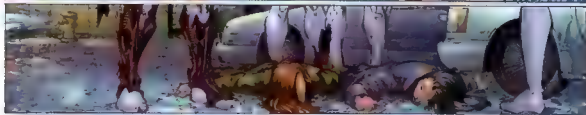
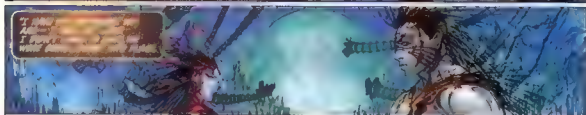
"IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO... IT'S ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE."

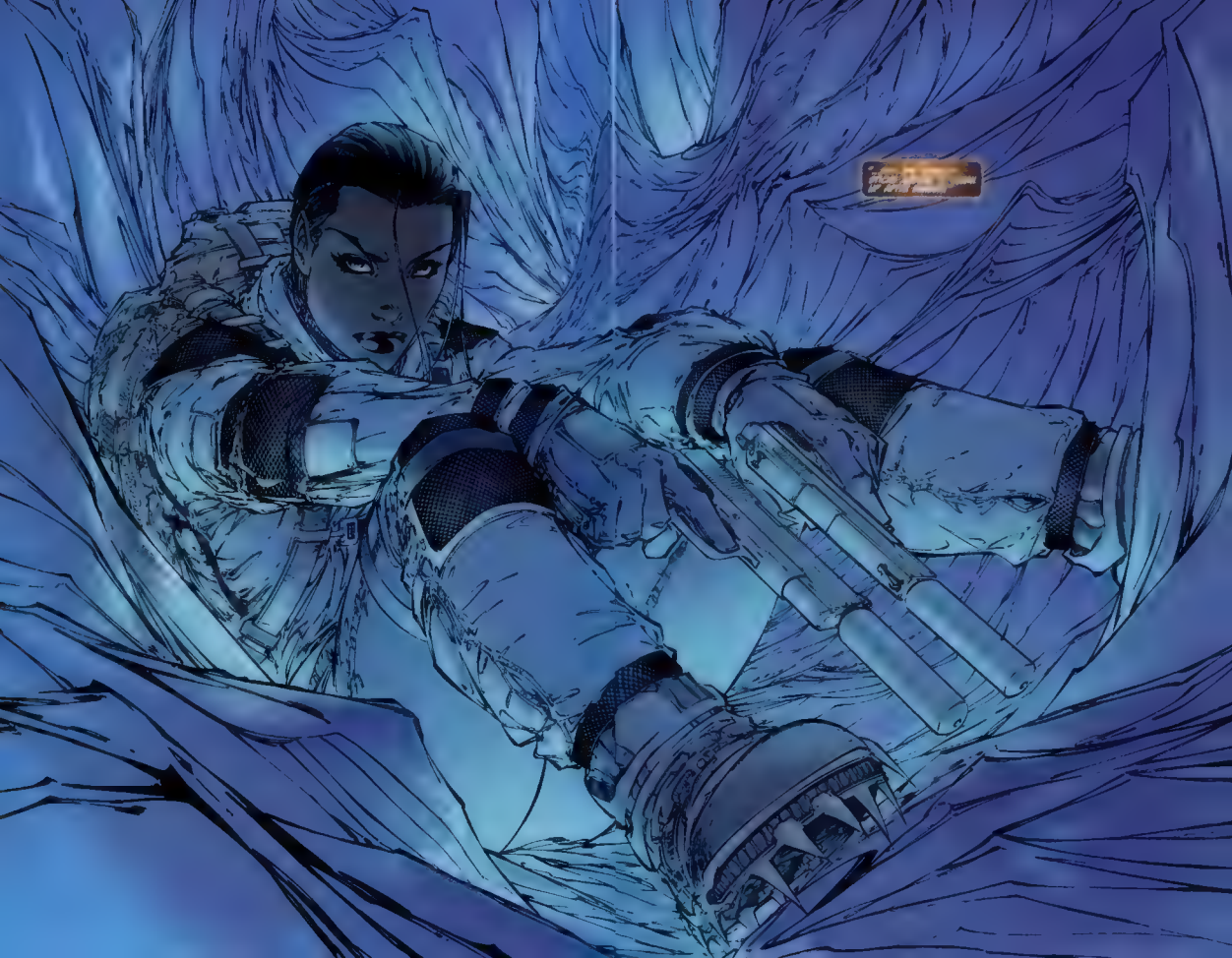


"NATIVE CANNON KNOWS OF YOUR ABILITY... WHO IS ONE ABILITY?"











FETCH
THE FEMALE
IT'S TIME TO
FINISH THIS



YOU HEAR
ME, HAWKE?



CANNON, ?



YOUR
OBSCURE RUN OF
LUCK HAS COME
TO AN END



BRANHA, SIR,
THREE SENTRY'S
ARE DOWN AND WE
CAN'T FIND THE
INTRUDER

WANA,
WE'VE GOT TO
PRIORITIZE.
HAWKE MUST
WAIT



SAR! I'VE
FOUND HER
SHE'S RIGHT
BEHIND YOU.

NO ONE
MOVES

YOU'RE GOING TO
RELEASE HAWKE AND
THE OTHERS TO ME END
OF DISCUSSION



MY
MY
MY



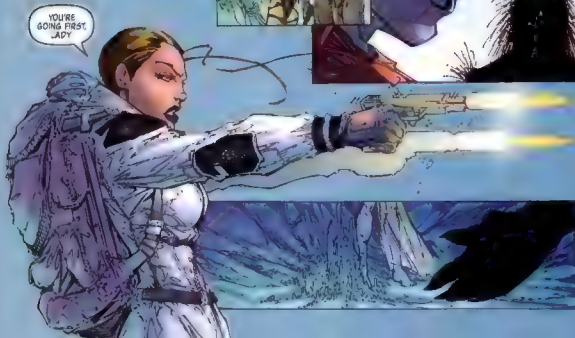
...YOU'RE QUITE
THE WOLF LITTLE
ONE.



STUPID
BUT BOLD

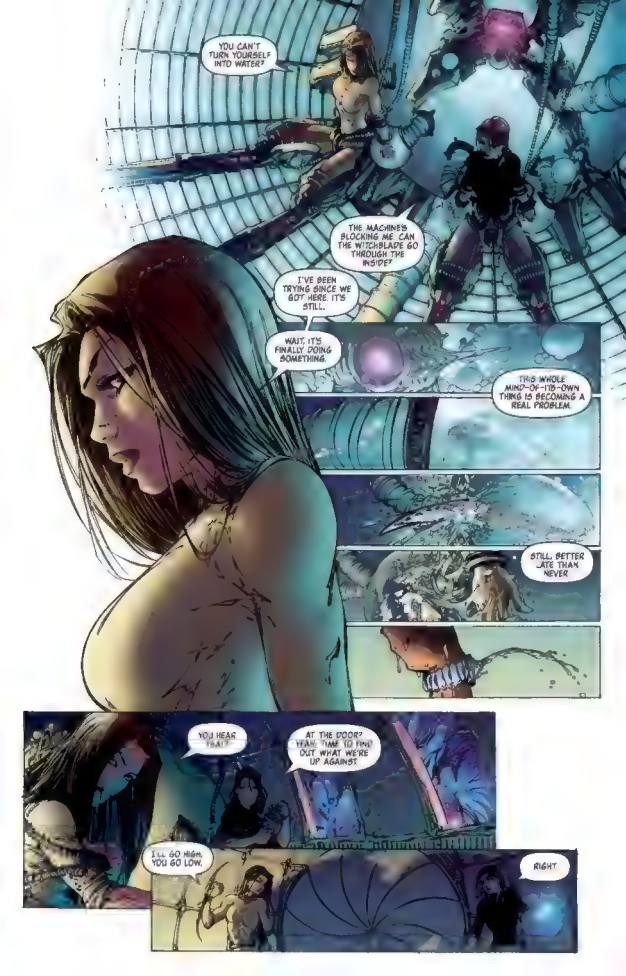


BRANHA,
REMOVE THIS
ANNOYANCE.



YOU'RE
GOING FIRST,
...ADY





YOU CAN'T
TURN YOURSELF
INTO WATER?

THE MACHINES
BLOCKING ME CAN
THE WITCHBLADE GO
THROUGH THE
INSIDE?

I'VE BEEN
TRYING SINCE WE
GOT HERE. IT'S
STILL.

WAIT, IT'S
FINALLY DOING
SOMETHING.

THIS WHOLE
MIND-OF-ITS-OWN
THING IS BECOMING A
REAL PROBLEM.

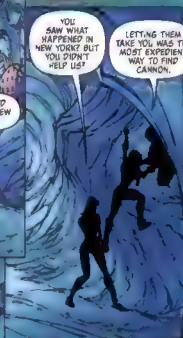
STILL, BETTER
LATE THAN
NEVER.

YOU HEAR
THAT?

AT THE DOOR?
HEAR TIME TO FIND
OUT WHAT WE'RE
UP AGAINST.

I'LL GO HIGH,
YOU GO LOW.

RIGHT





USE YOUR
HEAD, GIRL!

IN ABOUT A
MINUTE, THIS WHOLE
PLACE WILL KNOW
YOU'VE ESCAPED. WE'RE
BETTER OFF WITH ROOM
TO MANEUVER THAN WE
ARE TRAPPED IN
THAT WARREN

AS FOR
LEAVING, WE
WON'T BE
LEAVING
WITHOUT
CANNON



PUT THESE ON
THEY'RE BETTER
THAN NOTHING

I CAN REGULATE
MY TEMPERATURE
IT'LL BE ENOUGH
TELL ME ABOUT
CANNON



CANNON'S BEEN
ALTERED. **BADLY** ALTERED THE
ICE QUEEN IN THERE SAID SOMETHING
ABOUT REVENGE FOR SOMEONE
NAMED TARAS. DOES THIS MEAN
ANYTHING TO YOU?

TARAS! TARAS
WAS KILLED
WHEN...

WHEN
CANNON THREW
HIM INTO THE BASE
OF THE BLUE
SUN?

THE BLUE
SUN? YOU WERE
INVOLVED WITH
THAT?

IT'S A LONG
STORY, LARA. WHEN
YOU SAY "BADLY
ALTERED" YOU
MEAN

I MEAN HE
DOESN'T EVEN
LOOK HUMAN
ANYMORE

LISTEN, THERE
AREN'T MANY
PEOPLE I OWE DEBTS
AND EVEN FEWER I
CALL FRIENDS.

...BUT CANNON
HAWKE IS BOTH



THESE PEOPLE
HAVE A LOT TO
ANSWER FOR

CONTINUED

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For COW



Hans, who blames Cannon for
his back to their job. Although

Bill O'Neil

Michael Turner

Michael Turner

Michael Turner

Michael Turner

Renas Geerlings

Editor in chief David Wohl

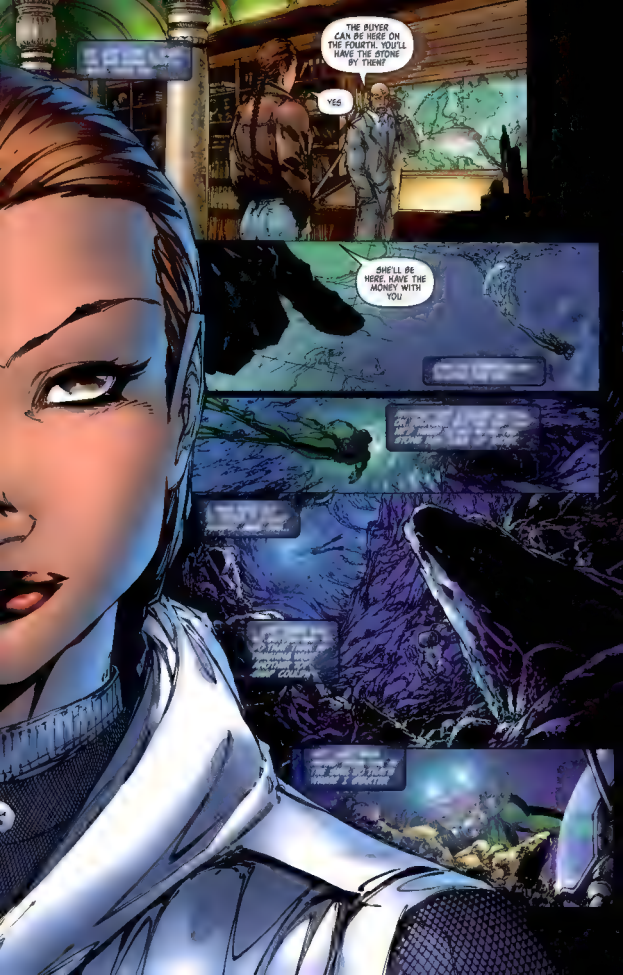
Talent Caldwell

Michael Turner

Peter Steigerwald

Alvin Corio, JETT and CME Page

Maarten Vaes



THE BUYER
CAN BE HERE ON
THE FOURTH. YOU'LL
HAVE THE STONE
BY THEN?

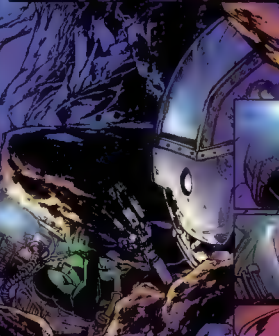
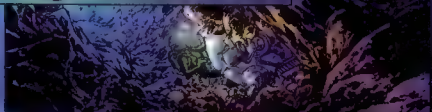
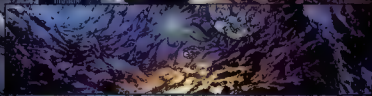
YES

SHE'LL BE
HERE. HAVE THE
MONEY WITH
YOU

THE STONE
IS HERE
STONE IS HERE

THE STONE
IS HERE
STONE IS HERE

THE STONE
IS HERE
STONE IS HERE



HE HADN'T GOT
OUT THERE, HE
HADN'T BEEN EITHER.

YOU'RE MATHER
CAPTIVATING, FOR
A TREASURE
HUNTER.

OH, GO ON
WITH YOU.

DID YOU COME
LOOKING FOR THE
STONE, OR WERE YOU
JUST LUCKY?

LUCKY? I'LL BE
LUCKY IF I'M NOT
CARRYING THAT THING'S
CURSE. THAT WORTHLESS
STONE HAS ALREADY
DRAGGED ONE MAN OFF
TO DAVEY JONES'S LOCKER,
AND NOW IT'S TRIED
TO KILL ME.

THROW IT
OVER THE SIDE
BEFORE MY BOAT
SINKS.

HOO, MY HEAD
HURTS... IT'S THE
CURSE.

IT'S NOT
BURIED
OKAY?

IT'S CALLED EIRDON'S EYE,
NAMED FOR THE HERO WHO
SWORE TO GUARD THE TEMPLE
AT SO-LYASHI, AND WHEN DUTY
CALLED HIM AWAY HE LEFT ONE
EYE BEHIND TO WATCH OVER THE
PLACE... OR SO THE LEGEND
GOES. THE STONE HAS BEEN
LOST FOR A LONG TIME.

DOES HAVE A
NICE OINK?

WOW, I THINK YOU
HAVE A NICE OINK
ONE.

EIRDON'S EYE?
REALLY? LET ME SEE
THAT, ARE YOU A
MERMAN?

WOW, IT'S
FRIGHTFULLY HEAVY
FOR ITS SIZE... I WAS
EXPECTING SOMETHING
A LITTLE...

LESS
DENSE?

I MEAN,
REALLY...



IF TARAS
HAD SURVIVED
INSIDE YOU,
CANNON, I'D HAVE
A REASON TO
LET YOU LIVE.

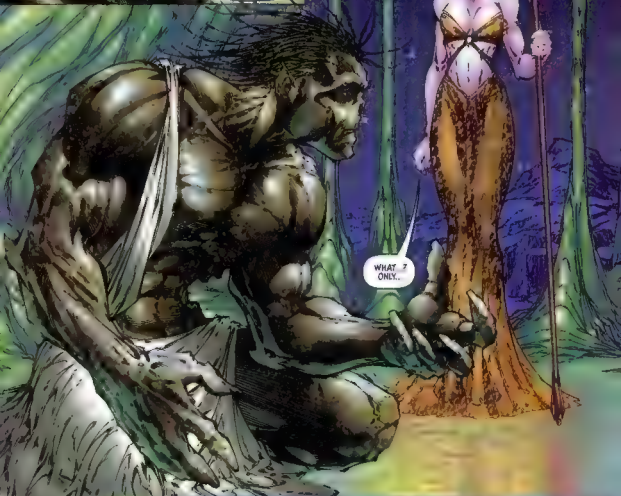
THOUGH
YOU'RE SO UGLY I
DON'T KNOW THAT I
COULD ACTUALLY GO
THROUGH WITH IT.

BUT HE DIDN'T,
AND I DON'T. THIS IS
THE END. ANY LAST
MOANS OR GIBBERISH
BEFORE I PUT YOU OUT
OF YOUR MISERY?

AH...

HHH...

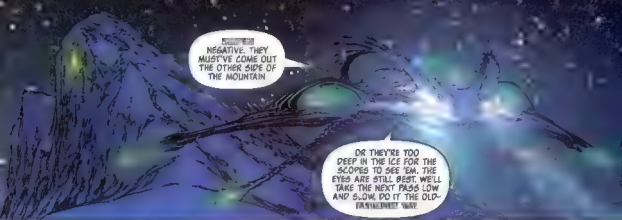
I... AH... WALKED
BEFORE I... AHH.
CRAWLER, AH.



WHAT?
ONLY...



TARAS?



NEGATIVE. THEY
MUST'VE COME OUT
THE OTHER SIDE OF
THE MOUNTAIN

OR THEY'RE TOO
DEEP IN THE ICE FOR THE
SCOPES TO SEE 'EM. THE
EYES ARE STILL BEST. WE'LL
TAKE THE NEXT PASS LOW
AND SLOW. DO IT THE OLD-
FASHIONED WAY.



THAT WAS
CLOSE. ARE WE
ALMOST... WHERE
ARE WE GOING,
LARA?

CANNON'S BOAT
TO GET THE WEAPONS.
NOW THAT THE AURORA'S
DISSIPATED THE DARKNESS
WILL COVER US. THE
QUICKEST WAY IS DOWN
THIS CLIFF.

DOWN A CLIFF?
ARE YOU KIDDING?
THAT'S A HUGE
WASTE OF TIME.

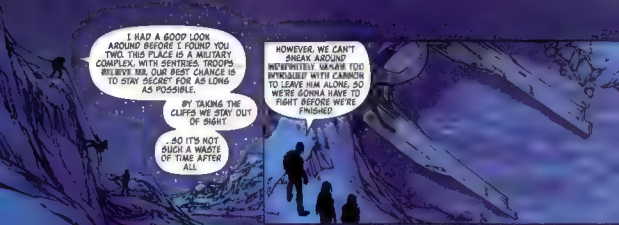
CANNON'S BACK
IN THOSE TUNNELS.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY
WE NEED TO BE
HIDING THERE...



HOW DO YOU
KNOW HE'S DYING?
I DON'T KNOW HE'S
DYING, AND I'M THE
ONLY ONE WHO'S
SEEN HIM?

THE BOAT'S WELL
HIDDEN. THEY WON'T
HAVE FOUND IT.

FOLLOW
ME.



I HAD A GOOD LOOK
AROUND BEFORE I FOUND YOU
TWO. THIS PLACE IS A MILITARY
COMPLEX, WITH SENTRIES, TROOPS
BELIEVE ME, OUR BEST CHANCE IS
TO STAY SECRET FOR AS LONG
AS POSSIBLE.

BY TAKING THE
CLIFFS WE STAY OUT
OF SIGHT

...SO IT'S NOT
SUCH A WASTE
OF TIME AFTER
ALL

HOWEVER, WE CAN'T
SNEAK AROUND
UNWITTINGLY, WE HAVE TOO
MANY THINGS WITH CANNON
TO LEAVE HIM ALONE, SO
WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO
FIGHT BEFORE WE'RE
FINISHED



AND FOR
THAT



WE'RE GOING
TO NEED BETTER
WEAPONS



CANNON
TELLS YOU MORE
THAN IN TALKING
MOST PEOPLE



THAT'S THAT
BECAUSE I'M THE
KIND OF PERSON WHO
COMES HALFWAY
ACROSS THE WORLD
TO GET A FRIEND
OUT OF TROUBLE

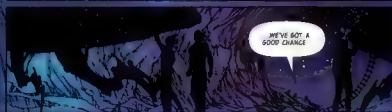


THIS THING
FEELS LIKE A
FOUR-FOOT
SEASHELL



HELD IN THAT COMPLEX
UP THERE. THIS IS AS FAR
AS THE SHADOWS CAN
TAKE US.

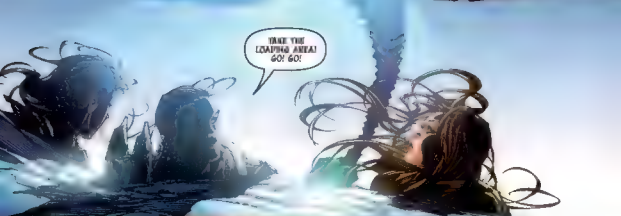
NOW IF WE CAN
PROP THEM BEFORE
THEY KNOW WE'RE
HERE.



WE'VE GOT A
GOOD CHANCE



LEAVE FROM
THE ENTRANCE
CLIFFSIDE WHEN
YOUR BACKS



TAKE THE
LOADING AREA!
GO! GO!

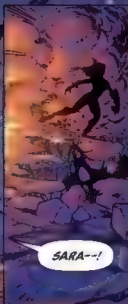


THIS ONE'S
MINE

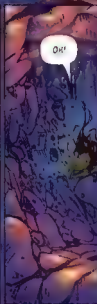


ELECTRICAL
FAILURE..!

YAAAAA---!

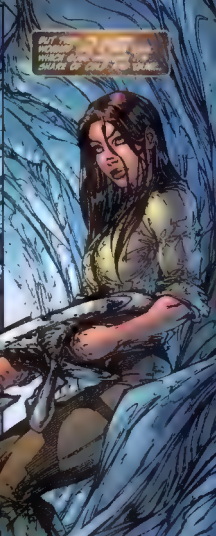
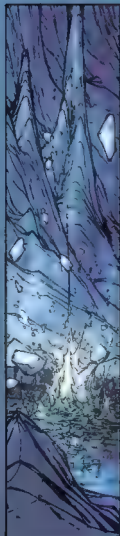


SARA---!



Oh!





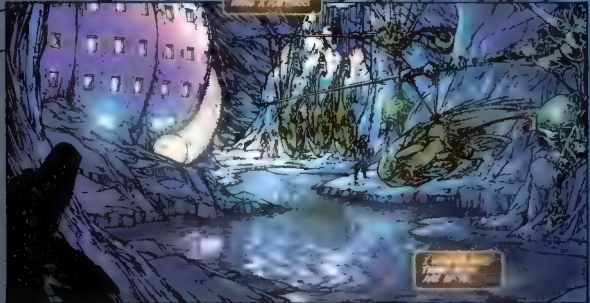
IT'S BEEN A
NEW YORK SINCE IN
JUNE... AT LEAST
IT'D BE MURDER...

AND THE...
WILL...
TOD... IT'S THE
GOLD AND THE...
THE...

BUT THE...
WILL...
WILL...
SHAKE OF...
THE...

THE...

THE...



THE...

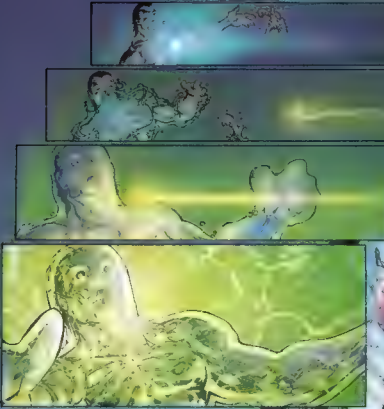


YOU CAN'T
JUST *SHOOT*
EVERYONE!

YOU HAD
SOMETHING ELSE IN
MIND WHEN YOU STRAPPED
ON THE WEAPON? SPARE
ME THE MORAL CRISIS
AND START PULLING
YOUR WEIGHT!

FINE!

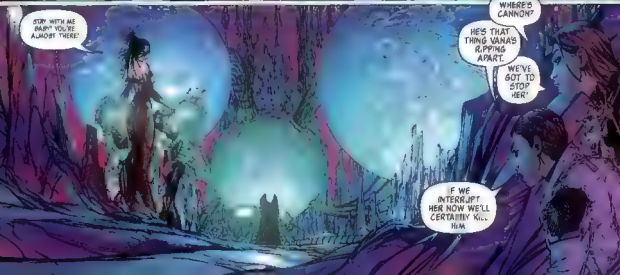
I HATE
THIS.

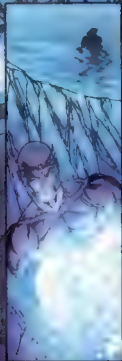
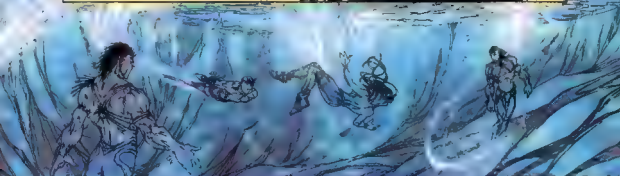
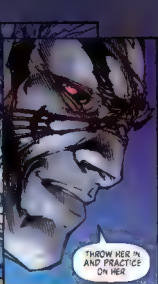


NICE SHOT.
NOW DON'T GO
TO PIECES ON ME.
CANNON'S THIS
WAY!

WHAT
ABOUT
SARA?

LET SARA
WORRY ABOUT
SARA

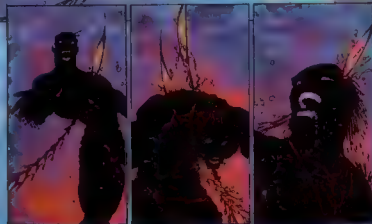






ONE NIGHT...

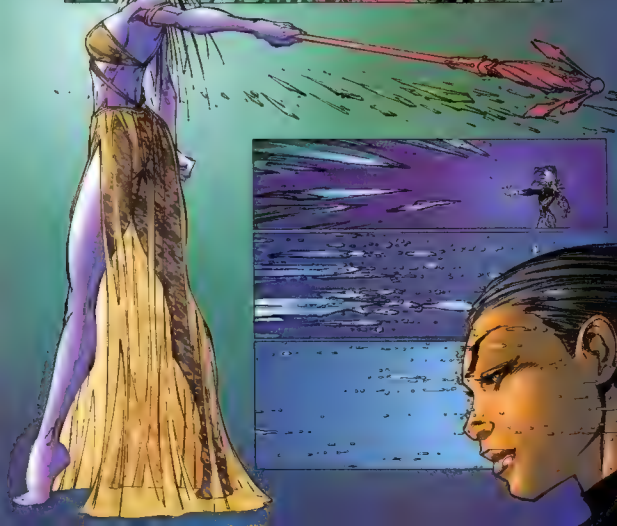
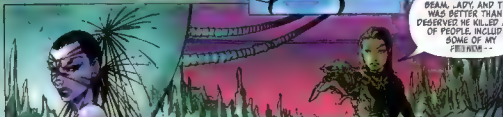
IT'S BEEN
ADAPTED TO BECOME
AS FLU
PARTY UNIFORM...



YOU WERE
SAYING, I
SOMETHING ABOUT
JOBLESSNESS, ?

THE
PRIMARY
REASON
ALL ABOUT WORK...







NOT SAID NOT
BAD AT ALL. I
MIGHT HAVE TO
TAKE YOU
SERIOUSLY



YEAH? LET ME
SAVE YOU THE
TROUBLE.



TSK TSK TSK
TSK TSK



NO.

COME ON
COME ON...
BLOODY
THING.



GET AWAY
FROM THAT
MACHINE!



YOU
DESERVE... TO
DIE FOR WHAT
YOU DID TO MY
SON.



STIM WHITTEN
INTERESTS ME. I
WONDER HOW IT
WILL WORK ON
MY ARM.

YOU'RE
GONNA KEEP
WONDERING
TOO.

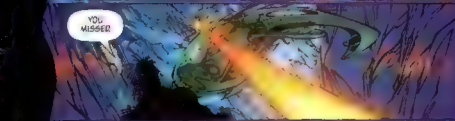
NOW'S IT
FEELS. NOW'S IT
FEEL TO KNOW
DEATH HAS
ARRIVED!



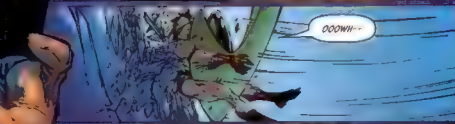
I WOULDN'T
KNOW.



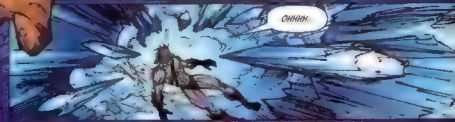
AAAH!



YOU
MISSED.



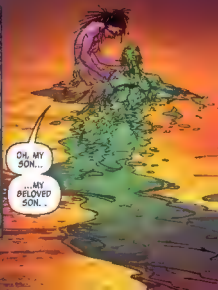
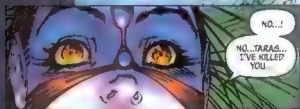
OOOHH--

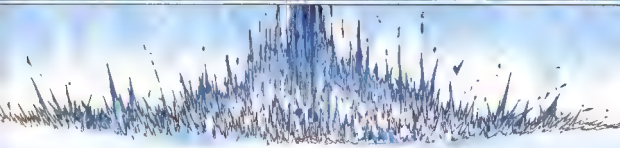
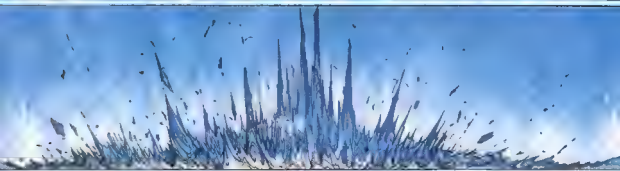


CHUCK.

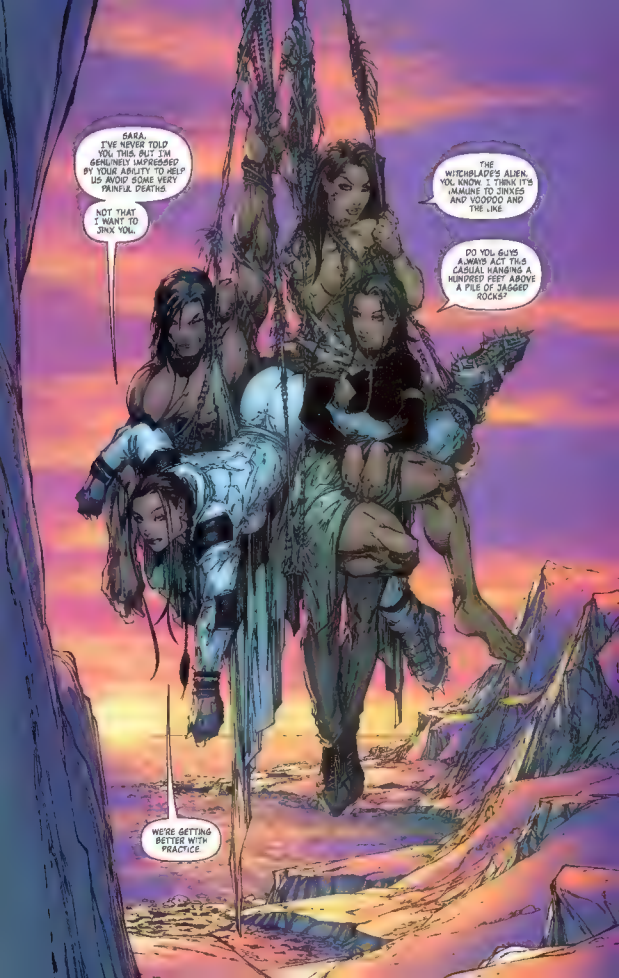


NOW THEN
TIME TO SEE
WHAT THE GALS
ARE UP TO.







A comic book panel featuring three women hanging from a large, gnarled tree branch. The woman on the left is upside down, wearing a white and black outfit. The woman in the middle is standing, wearing a green and black outfit. The woman on the right is also standing, wearing a black and white outfit. They are all looking towards the viewer. The background is a desert landscape with jagged rock formations and a sunset sky in shades of orange, yellow, and purple.

SARA,
I'VE NEVER TOLD
YOU THIS, BUT I'M
GENUINELY IMPRESSED
BY YOUR ABILITY TO HELP
US AVOID SOME VERY
PAINFUL DEATHS.

NOT THAT
I WANT TO
JINX YOU.

THE
WITCHBLADE'S ALIEN.
YOU KNOW, I THINK IT'S
IMAGINE TO JINXES
AND VOODOO AND
THE LIKE.

DO YOU GUYS
ALWAYS ACT THIS
CASUAL HANGING A
HUNDRED FEET ABOVE
A PILE OF JAGGED
ROCKS?

WE'RE GETTING
BETTER WITH
PRACTICE.

SHE DOES IT ALL
THE TIME. SERIOUSLY.
I'M THINKING OF
CHANGING MY PAGER
NUMBER.

YOU'RE
KIDDING.

WHAT IS THIS,
LARA. THE SIXTH TIME
YOU'VE DRAGGED ME INTO
SOME DEATH-STAKES
ESCAPADE OF YOURS? I'M
STARTING TO LOSE
TRACK.

SIX, SIXTY. IT'S
NOT THE QUANTITY,
SARA, BUT RATHER,
THE *QUALITY* THAT
COUNTS.

I'M GOING
TO LOOK IN ON
CANNON.

I DON'T KNOW,
SARA. CANNON
SPEAKS HIGHLY OF HER,
BUT SHE'S SO
MELLOW...

WELL, SHE *DID*
GROW UP IN SAN
DIEGO.

HEY, CANNON.
ARE YOU FEELING
ANY BETTER?

YEAH, MAYBE A
LITTLE. YOU KNOW I
JUST KEPT PLAYING FOR
TIME... ANYTHING THAT
WOULD BUY ME FIVE MORE
MINUTES... I KNEW YOU
ALL WOULD GET ME
OUT...

I HEAR YOU
HELP YOUR OWN
AGAINST VANA.
I'M IMPRESSED.

LARA TOLD
YOU THAT?

YEAH, AND IT
HURT HER TO SAY
IT. YOU SHOULD
HAVE SEEN HER
FACE.

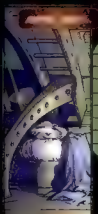
HONESTLY
CANNON, WHAT
DO YOU SEE IN
HER? SHE'S BRASH.
SHE'S RUDE.

YEAH, IT'S
TRUE. BUT
SHE'S *REALLY*
FUN.

THANKS
FOR COMING
TO GET ME. I
OWE YOU
ONE.

ANY
TIME

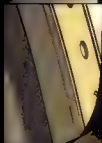
RIGHT



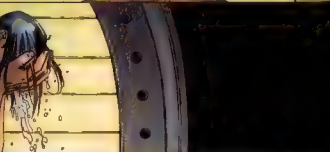
JUST EXHAUSTED

THAT'S ALL

JUST EXHAUSTED



I'M EXHAUSTED



JUST EXHAUSTED
THAT'S ALL



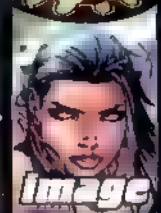
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COMIC
JIM VALENTINO
presented

PRINTED IN CANADA

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panels Michael Turner;

inks Jonathan Sibai;

colours Peter Steigerwald with Beth Sotelo;

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editor Renae Geerlings;

editor in chief David Wohl;

editorial assistance CJ Wilson, Joshua Reed, Sina Grace;

design Peter Steigerwald;

production Alvin Combs, Chaz Riggs, and Vidorian Medina





IT WAS 1943 DEEP IN
THE NORWEGIAN WINTER.

THE WORLD HAD GROWN FAMILIAR
WITH TERMS LIKE FASCISM AND
ETHNIC CLEANSING. TO FULFILL HIS
MEGALOMANIACAL VISION OF WORLD
DOMINATION, HITLER DECLARED THAT
THE NAZI PARTY WOULD WIN THE
RACE FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

WITH THIS SAID HIS NAZI ARMY
PILLAGED NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES FOR
THE ELEMENTS NECESSARY TO
CONSTRUCT PURE ANNIHILATION. ONLY
MILES FROM THE PRISTINE ICY LAKE
TINN, THE NORWEGIAN NORSK PLANT
RESIDES AND STEADFASTLY DEVELOPED
HEAVY WATER -- THE KEY COMPOUND
FOR MODERATING NUCLEAR REACTIONS.



ON THIS DAY, A SHIPMENT OF HEAVY WATER
WAS SCHEDULED TO MOVE ON THE HEAVILY
GUARDED HYDRO FERRY, THEN BY TRAIN
FROM NORWAY TO GERMANY. ALLIES AND
REVOLUTIONARIES HAD SUFFERED SEVERAL
FAILED ATTEMPTS AT DESTROYING THE
PLANT AND THE COMPOUND'S TRANSPORT.

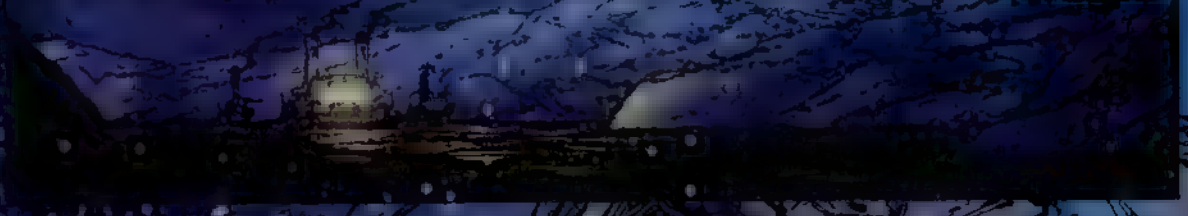


THIS HISTORY
WAS WRITTEN.

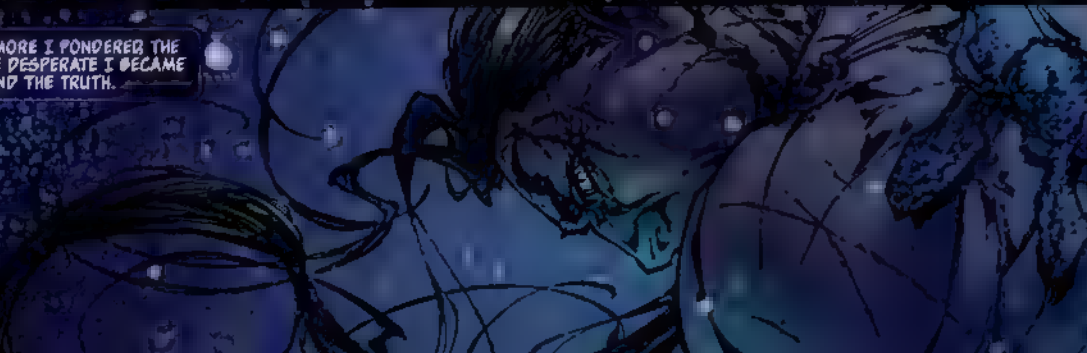


HISTORY IS NOT SOMETHING WE LEARN
FROM BOOKS OR SCRIPTURES OR MEDIA.
HISTORY IS PERCEPTION, NOT TRUTH.

AS I THOUGHT ABOUT MY HISTORY --
THE PAST THAT HAUNTED ME AND WOULD
POTENTIALLY THREATEN THE REST OF THE
WORLD -- I QUESTIONED MY PERCEPTION.



THE MORE I PONDERED THE
MORE DESPERATE I BECAME
TO FIND THE TRUTH.

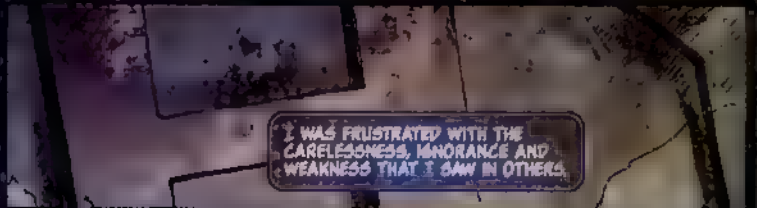


I WAS FINALLY READY TO
CHALLENGE MY HISTORY, AND
ALL WHO WROTE IT, AND TAKE
THE PEN INTO MY OWN HAND.

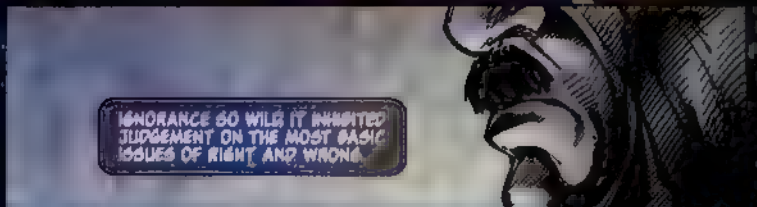


AS I WAITED, THE HYDRO AND ITS
CONVOY CRAWLED ACROSS THE ICY
WATERS, UNAWARE OF THE AMBITION
IN THE SILENT BEING BEFORE IT.

MY ENTIRE BODY PULSED WITH
DETERMINATION THAT WAS SO
PURE, THAT IT WALKED A TIGHT LINE
BETWEEN PASSION AND RAGE.



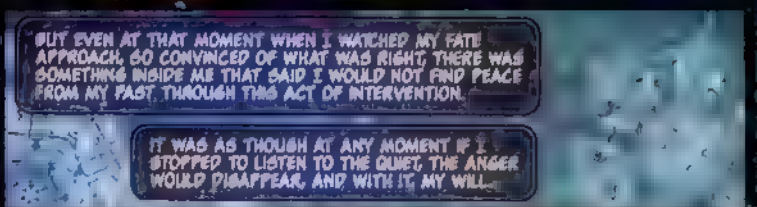
I WAS FRUSTRATED WITH THE
CARELESSNESS, IGNORANCE AND
WEAKNESS THAT I SAW IN OTHERS.



IGNORANCE SO WILD IT INHIBITED
JUDGEMENT ON THE MOST BASIC
ISSUES OF RIGHT AND WRONG.

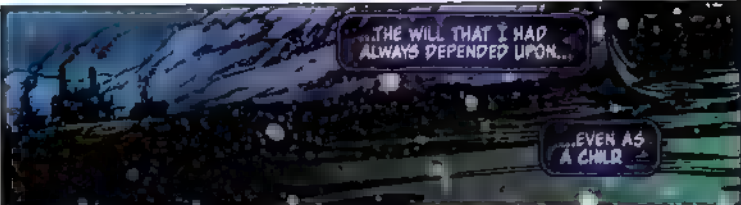


ANGER IS A COMPELLING
EMOTION. IT CAN PUSH
PEOPLE TO COMMITTING
TREACHEROUS CRIMES.



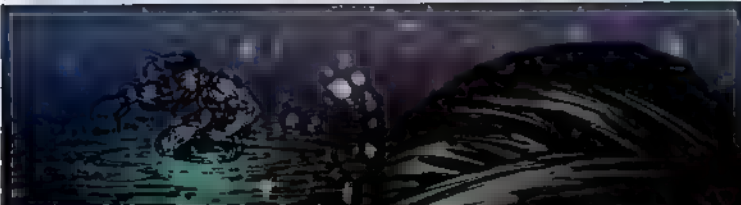
BUT EVEN AT THAT MOMENT WHEN I WATCHED MY FATE
APPROACH, SO CONVINCED OF WHAT WAS RIGHT, THERE WAS
SOMETHING INSIDE ME THAT SAID I WOULD NOT FIND PEACE
FROM MY PAST, THROUGH THIS ACT OF INTERVENTION.

IT WAS AS THOUGH AT ANY MOMENT IF I
STOPPED TO LISTEN TO THE QUIET, THE ANGER
WOULD DISAPPEAR, AND WITH IT, MY WILL.



...THE WILL THAT I HAD
ALWAYS DEPENDED UPON...

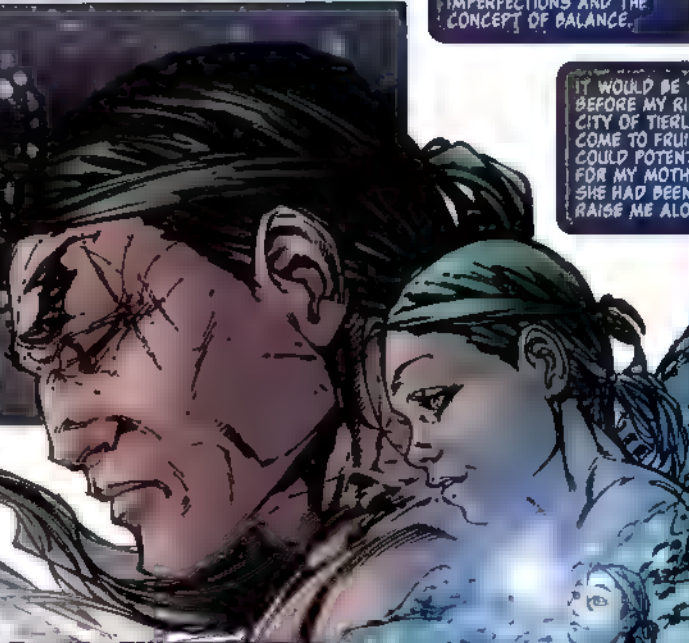
...EVEN AS
A CHILD...



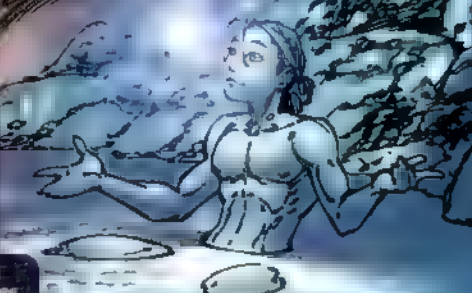
THE FIRST SIGN THAT I WAS
MY FATHER'S SON BARED
ITSELF WHEN I WAS ONLY A
YOUNG BOY — AT THE AGE
WHEN I WAS STILL THE VERY
CENTER OF MY OWN UNIVERSE,
UNABLE TO COMPREHEND
IMPERFECTIONS AND THE
CONCEPT OF BALANCE.



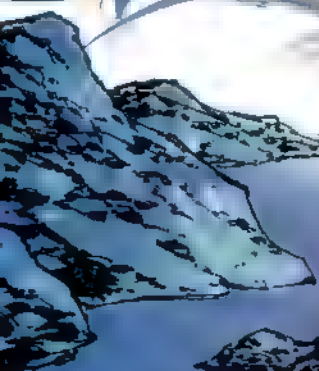
IT WOULD BE TEN YEARS
BEFORE MY RIGHTS IN THE
CITY OF TIERLAN WOULD
COME TO FRUITION AND I
COULD POTENTIALLY PROVIDE
FOR MY MOTHER. UNTIL THEN,
SHE HAD BEEN FORCED TO
RAISE ME ALONE.



WE WOULD SPEND DAYS TOGETHER
PRACTICING PLAYFULLY THE POWERS THAT
COURSED THROUGH OUR ELITE LINEAGE.
SHE EDUCATED ME ON THE BASIC
PRINCIPLES OF WATER MANIPULATION AND
ENCOURAGED ME TO EXPERIMENT WITH
MY ABILITIES WHENEVER I CHOSE.

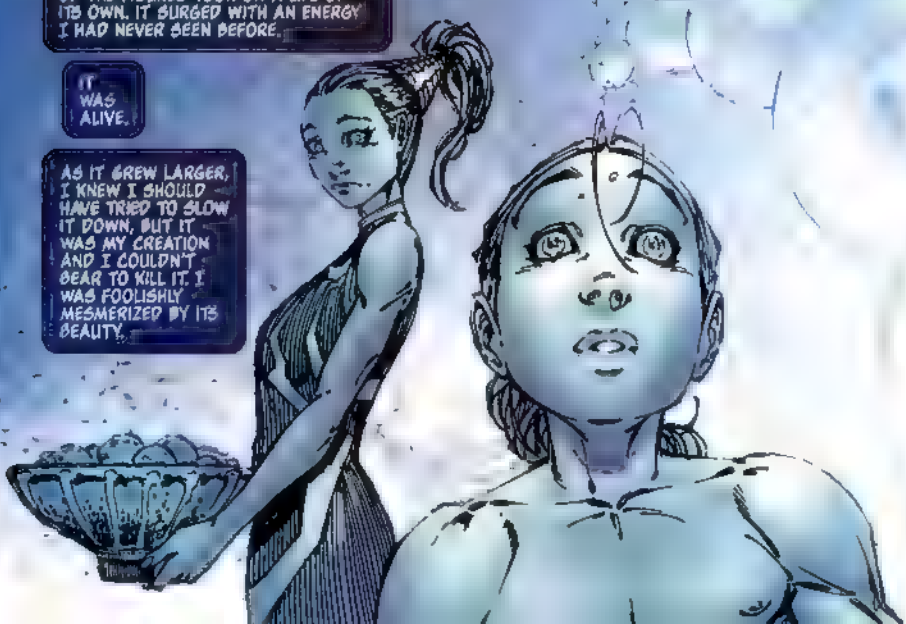


I AM SURE NOW SHE
WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE
RESTRICTIVE IF SHE HAD
KNOWN THE STRENGTH OF
MY RECKLESS POWER.

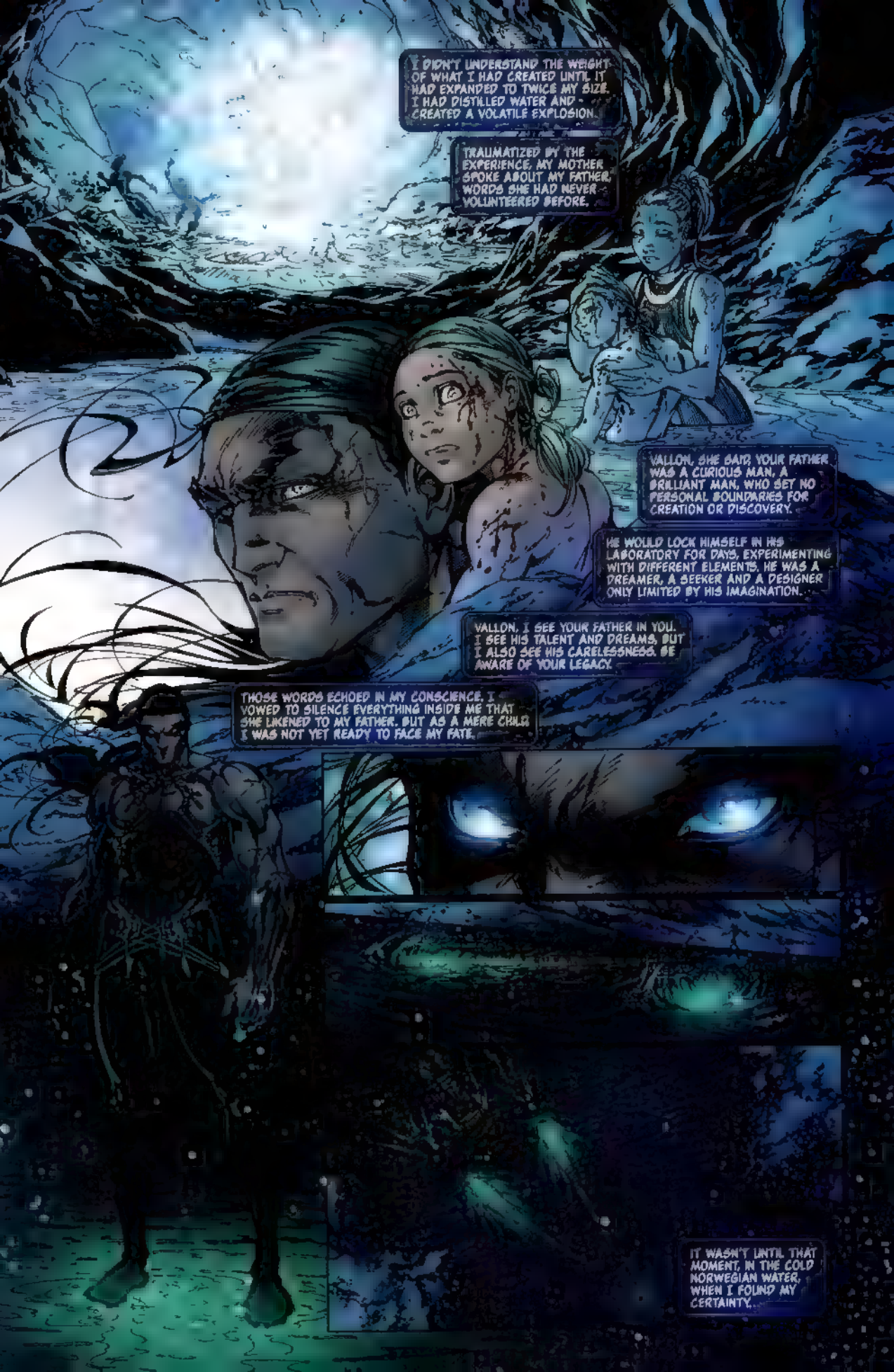


ONE DAY, WHEN I WAS FORMING LOOSE
WATER SCULPTURES IN OUR HOME, ONE
OF THE FIGURES TOOK ON A LIFE OF
ITS OWN. IT BURGED WITH AN ENERGY
I HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

IT
WAS
ALIVE.



AS IT GREW LARGER,
I KNEW I SHOULD
HAVE TRIED TO SLOW
IT DOWN, BUT IT
WAS MY CREATION
AND I COULDN'T
BEAR TO KILL IT. I
WAS FOOLISHLY
MESMERIZED BY ITS
BEAUTY.



I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE WEIGHT
OF WHAT I HAD CREATED UNTIL IT
HAD EXPANDED TO TWICE MY SIZE.
I HAD DISTILLED WATER AND
CREATED A VOLATILE EXPLOSION.

TRAUMATIZED BY THE
EXPERIENCE, MY MOTHER
SPOKE ABOUT MY FATHER,
WORDS SHE HAD NEVER
VOLUNTEERED BEFORE.

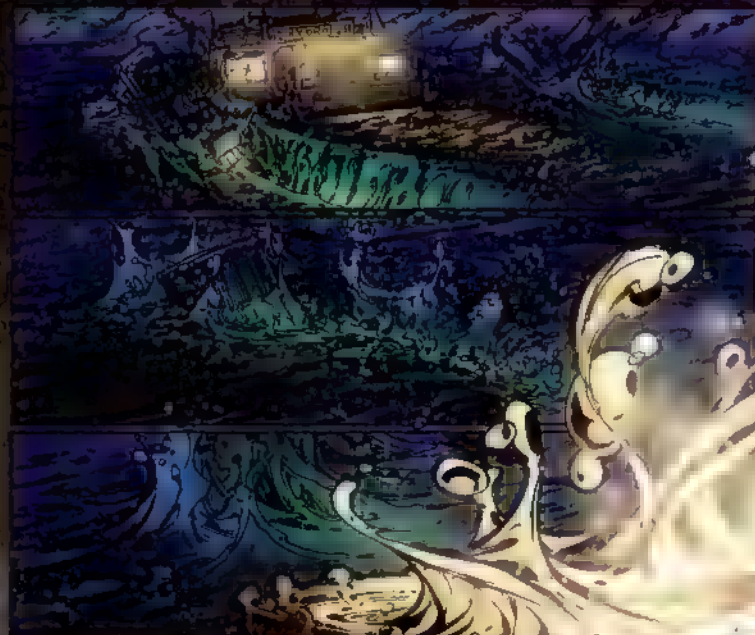
VALLON, SHE SAID, YOUR FATHER
WAS A CURIOUS MAN, A
BRILLIANT MAN, WHO SET NO
PERSONAL BOUNDARIES FOR
CREATION OR DISCOVERY.

HE WOULD LOCK HIMSELF IN HIS
LABORATORY FOR DAYS, EXPERIMENTING
WITH DIFFERENT ELEMENTS. HE WAS A
DREAMER, A SEEKER AND A DESIGNER
ONLY LIMITED BY HIS IMAGINATION.

VALLON, I SEE YOUR FATHER IN YOU.
I SEE HIS TALENT AND DREAMS, BUT
I ALSO SEE HIS CARELESSNESS. BE
AWARE OF YOUR LEGACY.

THOSE WORDS ECHOED IN MY CONSCIENCE. I
VOWED TO SILENCE EVERYTHING INSIDE ME THAT
SHE LIKENED TO MY FATHER. BUT AS A MERE CHILD
I WAS NOT YET READY TO FACE MY FATE.

IT WASN'T UNTIL THAT
MOMENT, IN THE COLD
NORWEGIAN WATER,
WHEN I FOUND MY
CERTAINTY.



...AND BLIND PASSION, JUST AS MY RECKLESS FATHER. HIS GIFTS WERE ALSO HIS DEMONS. HIS DRIVE TO PUSH THE LIMITS OF NATURE FORCED HIM INTO CARELESSNESS. WHEN HE WAS EXPERIMENTING WITH NEW ENERGY SOURCES FOR OUR CITY, HE FOUND AN ELEMENT THAT SEEMED AS BOUNDLESS AS HIS OWN TALENT.

HE BECAME OBSESSED WITH HIS NEW DISCOVERY AND IT POSSESSED HIM IN TURN. HE WAS THE FIRST TO DISCOVER NUCLEAR FISSION AND THE COMPOUND THEY NOW CALL "HEAVY WATER."

MY FATHER'S DEDICATION TO DISCOVERY WAS PURE -- THIS IS WHAT DROVE HIM. ASSISTING THE PROGRESS OF TIERLAN WAS INITIALLY HIS GOAL, BUT QUICKLY BECAME PERIPHERAL.



WHEN TESTING THE COMPOUND HE SAW ITS POTENTIAL AS THE CLEANEST FORM OF ENERGY OUR WORLD HAD EVER SEEN. THE DREAMER DISREGARDED THE DANGER OF SUCH ENERGY AND CONTINUED PUSHING IT TO NEW HEIGHTS -- HEIGHTS THAT COULD NEVER BE ACHIEVED SAFELY.



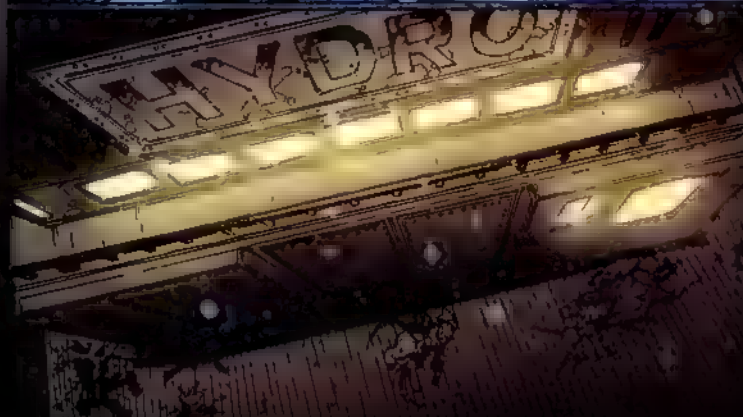
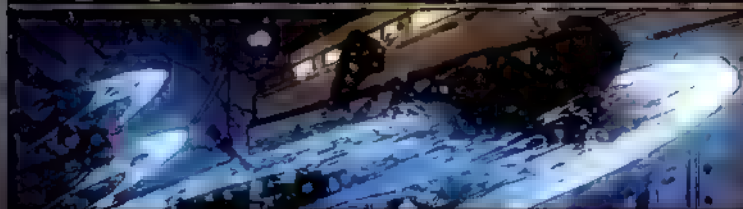
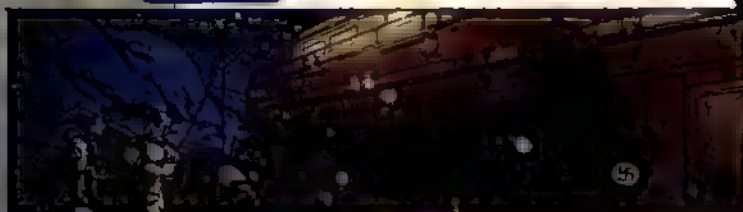


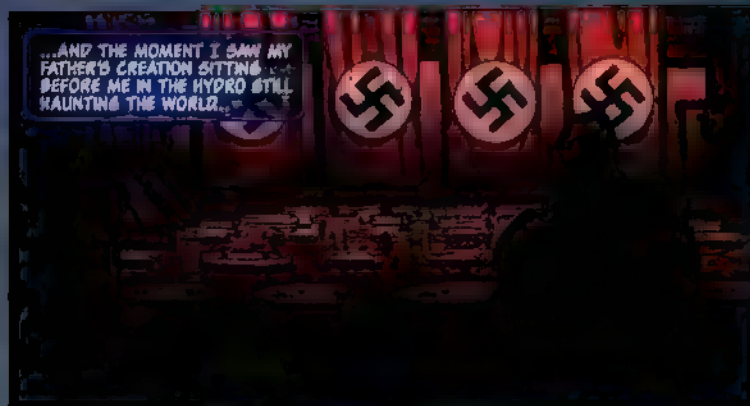
THE WATER...ANGRY AND VIOLATED...SEEPED FROM THE LABORATORY LIKE A VIPER AND POISONED OUR GREAT CITY. THOUSANDS OF OUR PEOPLE SUFFERED RADIATION SICKNESS AND HUNDREDS DIED

THE ELITE COUNCIL TRIED HIM AS A BROTHER BECAUSE OF THE ELITE BLOOD THAT RAN THROUGH HIS VEINS. BUT THIS DEVASTATING INCIDENT ONLY SOLIDIFIED RUMORS ABOUT HIS CARELESSNESS AND LUNACY, AND THE COUNCIL'S HAND FELL HEAVY UPON HIS SHOULDERS. THEY FEARED THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER CATASTROPHE.

THEY PUNISHED HIM IN THE MOST DISGRACEFUL FASHION -- HIS FAMILY'S NAME WAS TO BE DISHONORED

THIS WAS TOO MUCH FOR HIM TO BEAR...





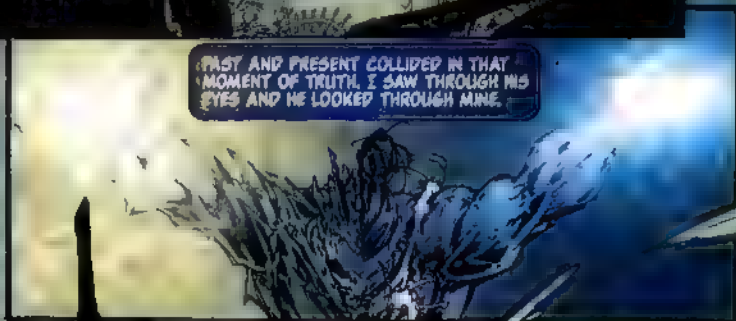
...AND THE MOMENT I SAW MY FATHER'S CREATION SITTING BEFORE ME IN THE HYDRO STILL HAUNTING THE WORLD.



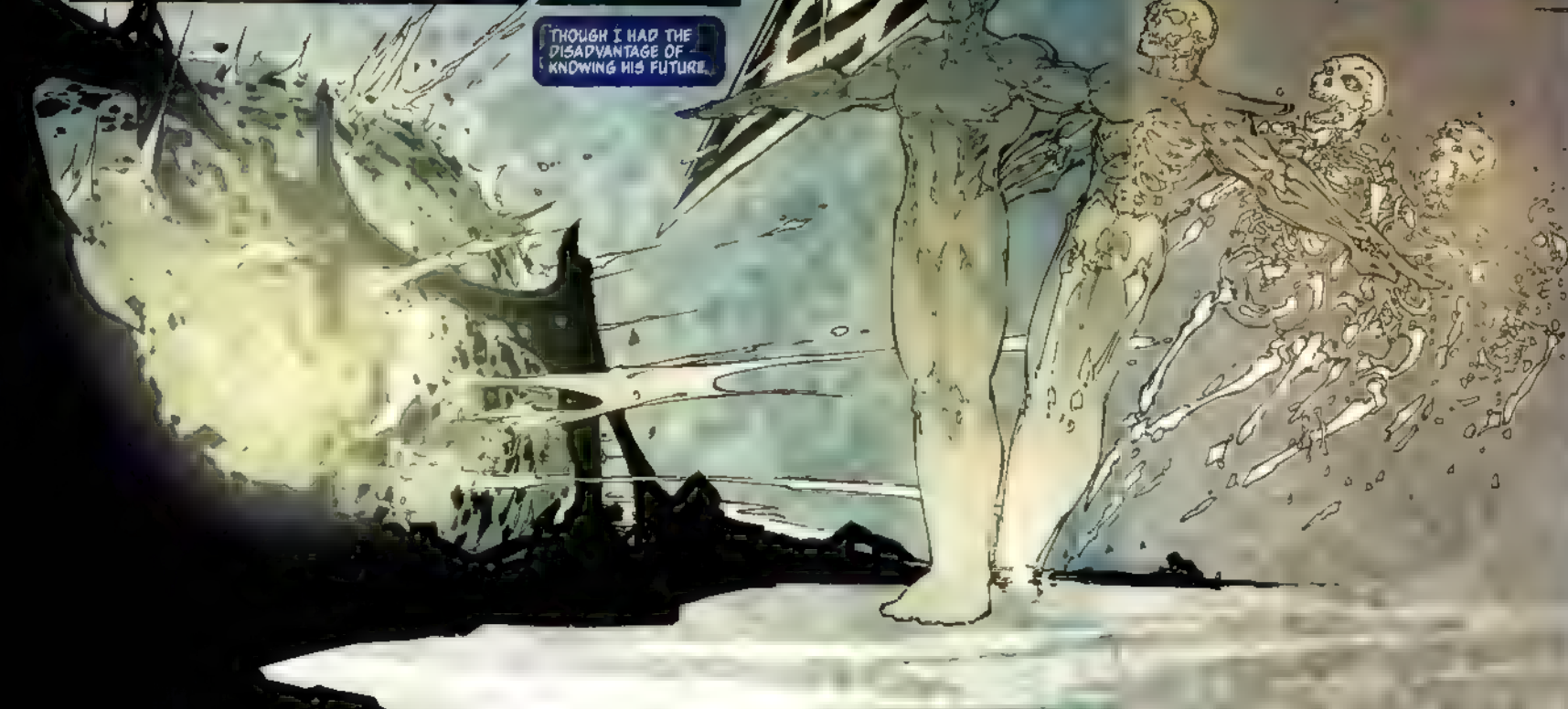
I SAW HIM ENTERING HIS LABORATORY FOR THE LAST TIME, FILLED WITH A SELFISH DETERMINATION TO DESTROY HIS WORLD AND HIMSELF EVEN THEN HE SUCCEEDED IN ONLY ONE OF THESE TASKS.

A DISSIDENT WITH HATRED FOR THE HUMANS HAD RETRIEVED MY FATHER'S NOTES FROM THE ASHES AND PATIENTLY TRANSLATED THEM OVER DECADES.

HE DELIVERED THE NOTES TO THE HUMANS, HOPING TO FORWARD THEIR PASSION FOR GENOCIDE AND LEAD THEM TOWARD EXTINCTION.



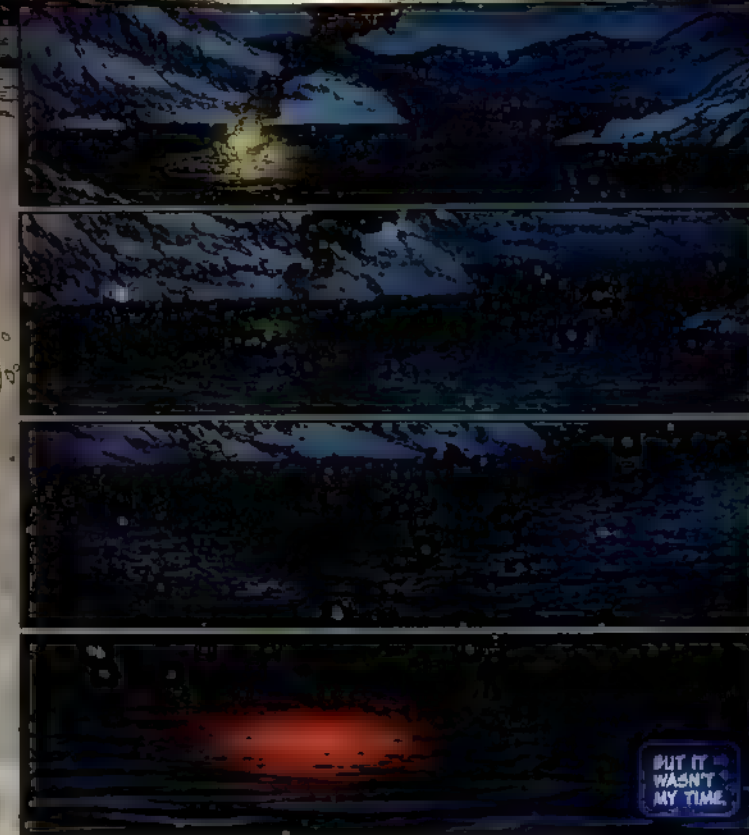
PAST AND PRESENT COLLIDED IN THAT MOMENT OF TRUTH. I SAW THROUGH HIS EYES AND HE LOOKED THROUGH MINE.



THOUGH I HAD THE DISADVANTAGE OF KNOWING HIS FUTURE.

I WAS AT PEACE WITH THE THOUGHT THAT I WOULD NOW BE TAKING THE SAME DEATH AS MY FATHER, AND OUR CURSE OF BLIND CREATION WOULD END WITH ME.

I WAS READY TO TAKE THE FINAL JOURNEY.



BUT IT WASN'T MY TIME.



LIKE A PHOENIX REBORN FROM THE
ASHES, I WAS THRUST BACK TO LIFE.
INFUSED WITH THE POWER OF THE
WATER I BELIEVE MY MOLECULES SHAM
WITH THE WATER AND WERE
REENERGIIZED UNHURDENED AND PURE.

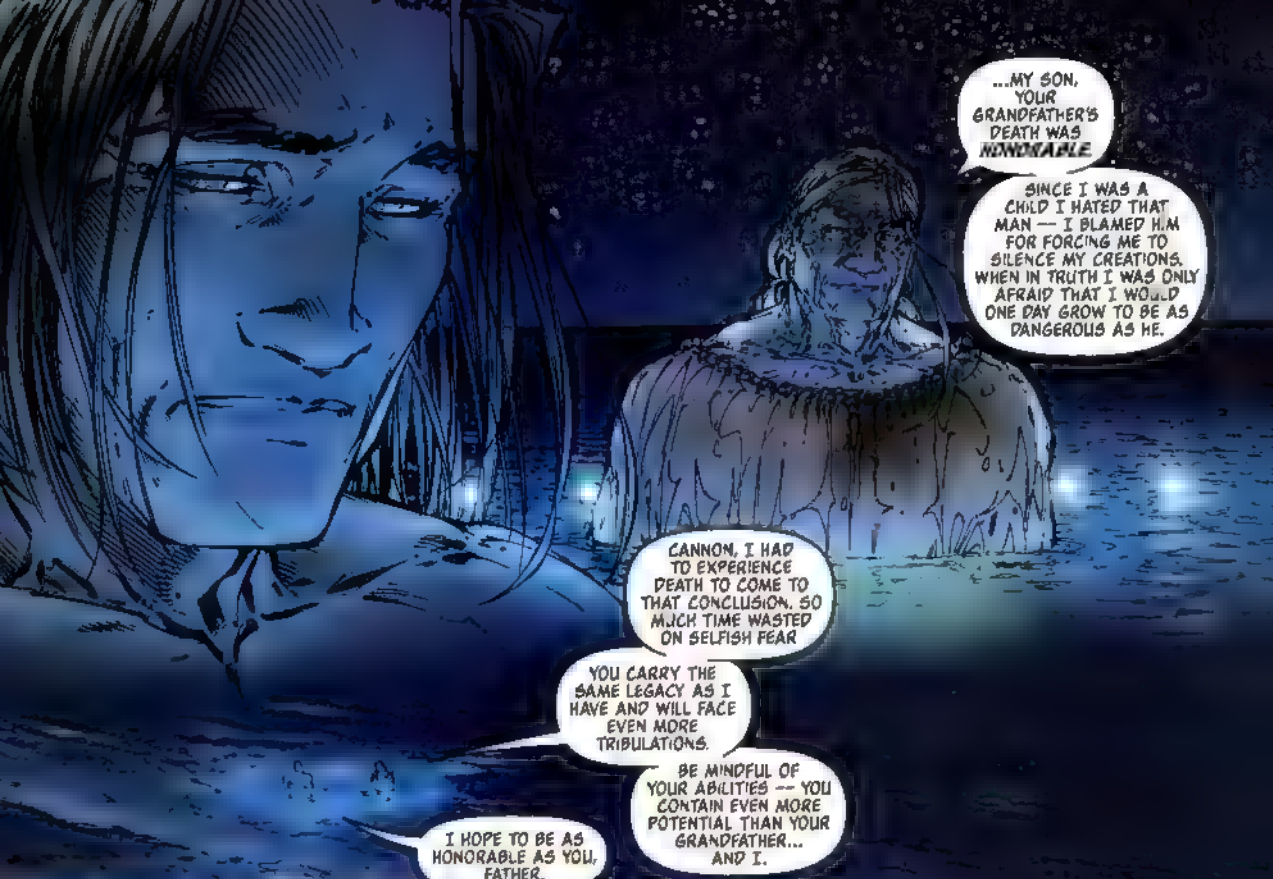
I WAS GIVEN A
SECOND CHANCE...
AND I UNDERSTOOD.

IT WAS NOT FOR ME
TO CONTINUE OR END
THE CYCLE THAT MY
FATHER BEGAN...

...BUT TO CHALLENGE
MY FEAR OF DISCOVERY
AND CREATION...

...AND FACE THE DAY
THAT I TOO MIGHT
BECOME CARELESS AND
LOST JUST AS HE HAD.

SO YOU
SEE...



...MY SON,
YOUR
GRANDFATHER'S
DEATH WAS
HONORABLE

SINCE I WAS A
CHILD I HATED THAT
MAN — I BLAMED HIM
FOR FORCING ME TO
SILENCE MY CREATIONS.
WHEN IN TRUTH I WAS ONLY
AFRAID THAT I WOULD
ONE DAY GROW TO BE AS
DANGEROUS AS HE.

CANNON, I HAD
TO EXPERIENCE
DEATH TO COME TO
THAT CONCLUSION. SO
MUCH TIME WASTED
ON SELFISH FEAR

YOU CARRY THE
SAME LEGACY AS I
HAVE AND WILL FACE
EVEN MORE
TRIBULATIONS.

BE MINDFUL OF
YOUR ABILITIES -- YOU
CONTAIN EVEN MORE
POTENTIAL THAN YOUR
GRANDFATHER...
AND I.

I HOPE TO BE AS
HONORABLE AS YOU,
FATHER.



SON, LOOK
AT ME...



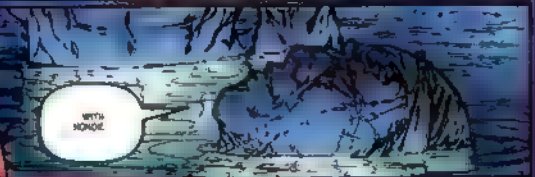
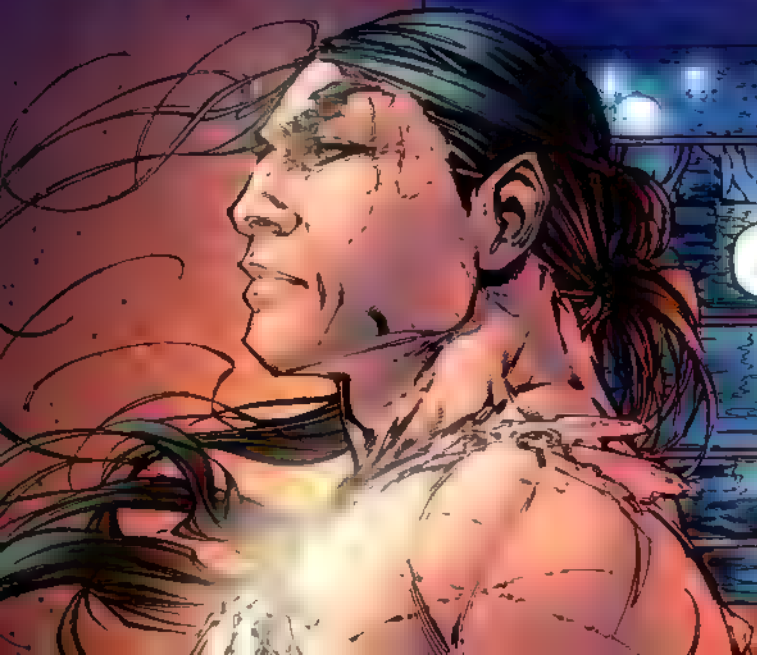
I HAVE LIVED A
COMPLETE LIFE,
CANNON...

AND YOU
WILL HAVE
THE SAME.

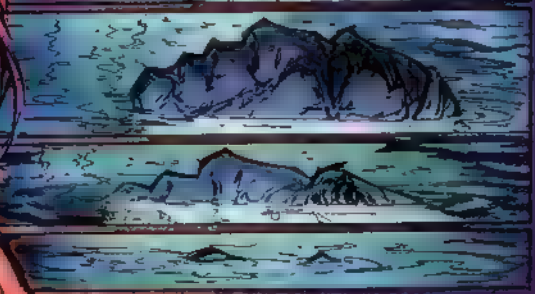
NOW, IT IS
MY TIME.



WITH HONOR
MY SON.

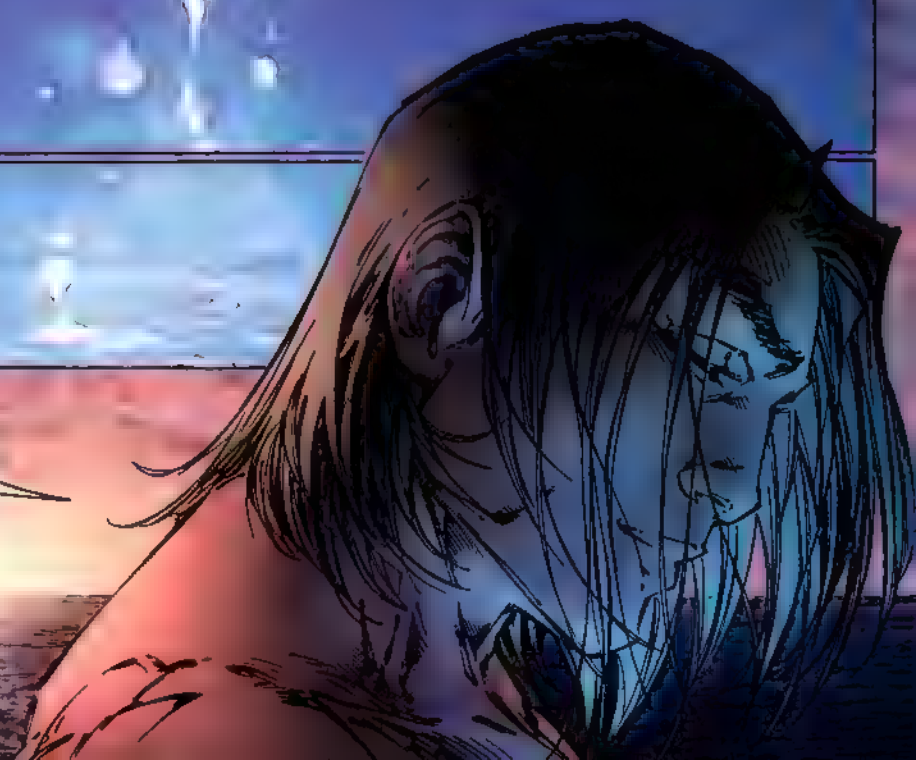


WITH HONOR





WITH
HONOR.



What is HEAVY WATER

Article and timeline by Olivia Chadha.

Heavy water is a key substance in a type of nuclear reactor where plutonium can be developed from uranium. It exists naturally in water, but only in extremely small amounts, less than 1 part in 5,000. The production of heavy water has always been severely regulated, and the compound's export is controlled. Heavy water is one of the two principal moderators that allow a nuclear reactor to function with natural uranium as its fuel. A derivation of deuterium is essential for the production of tritium and ${}^6\text{LiD}$, two ingredients used to create thermonuclear weapons. A nation seeking large quantities of heavy water probably has the intention of using the substance to moderate a nuclear reactor and produce plutonium as well. Though there are some reactors that are designed solely for the production of electricity, like the CANDU (Canadian Deuterium Uranium) reactors in Canada.

TIMELINE OF KEY POLITICAL AND ATOMIC EVENTS IN WORLD WAR II (*Through 1943*).

1933

January - Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany

1934

August - Hitler becomes Fuhrer of Germany

1938

Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann's discovery of fission steers Germany toward developing an atomic weapon

1939

September 1 - Germany invades Poland.



Layouts for Page 5, as Mike tried to figure out the best staging for the beginning of the attack scene.

Michael Turner's SKETCH BOOK

Captions by Peter Steigerwald

September 3 - Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declare war on Germany.

September 4 - British royal air force attacks the German navy

September 5 - The United States proclaims neutrality

October - Einstein warns President Roosevelt that Germany has the power to create an atomic bomb

November 8 - Assassination attempt on Hitler fails

1940

April - Germany invades Denmark and Norway

May - Germany invades France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; Winston Churchill becomes British Prime Minister

November - Roosevelt re-elected as U.S. President

Character ideas for Vallon's father (Cannon's grandfather) who makes his first appearance, in this book! The objects on his head are actually a form of decoration, not hair. As are most things in their world, these are made from coral.



1941

May - Sinking of the Bismarck by the British navy

December 7 - Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor

December 8 - The United States and Britain declare war on Japan

December 11 - Germany declares war on the United States

December 19 - Hitler takes complete command of the German army

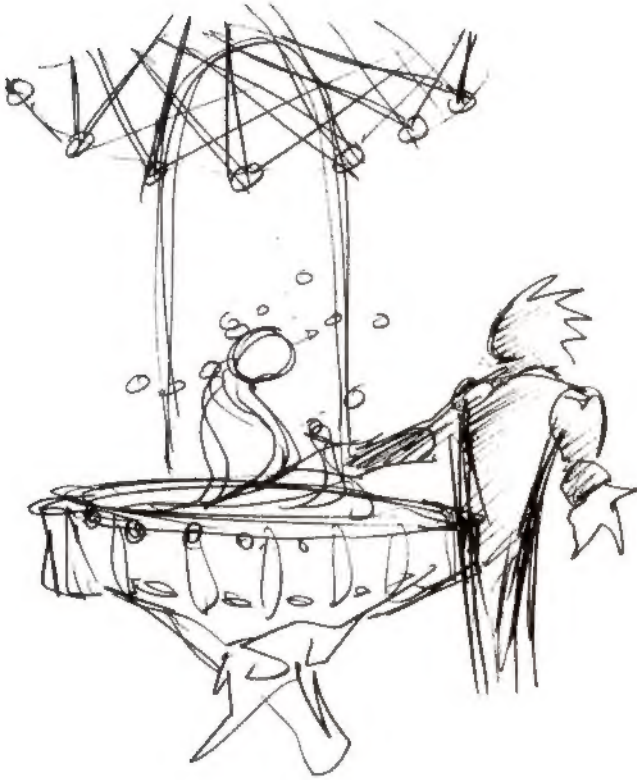
1942

September - The Manhattan Project is secretly formed to build the atomic bomb before the Germans

December - Enrico Fermi demonstrates the first artificial nuclear fission in the University of Chicago



*Head studies/thumbnails for the
time transition on Page 10*



1943

February 2 - First bombing raid by The United States on Germany

May - The Hanford Site is built in Richland, Washington by the Manhattan Project to produce plutonium

July - Mussolini arrested and the Italian Fascist government falls

October 13 - Italy declares war on Germany



*The manly man himself, Vallon. (above)
The young adorable Vallon. (right)
Vallon's mother in several different hair styles. (facing page)*

*Vallon reborn.
(Let me tell you.. "make it red glowing water" is not as simple
as it sounds...But that's Michael...always a challenge.)*

I'm going to sleep now.

DEDICATED IN LOVING MEMORY TO
LARRY TURNER

SEPTEMBER 28, 1937 - OCTOBER 16, 2001